WELSH RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

J. VYRNWY MORGAN, D.D.

WELSH RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

"*The day is advancing rapidly, for so large is becoming the sphere of mutual co-operative work in the reforms that are going on, that men who before would scarcely look at each other or walk on the same side of the street find themselves assembled on peace or temperance platforms, and, to their amazement, when they see a brother there and look him over, he has neither horns nor hoofs. It is a great thing to bring men together. A procedure in this life that disintegrates and scatters men is not Christian. By and by, when all the good that is in all the churches shall be confluent, and when men shall help each other by all that they agree in; when the things in which men agree—which are a hundred times more than those in which they disagree—shall come to the front and to the top, there is moral power enough in this world to make an advance of ages as measured by the past.*"

—Henry Ward Beecher.

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Photo by A. W. SARGENT.] THE EDITOR. [*Frontispiece.*

Welsh Religious Leaders in the Victorian Era

EDITED BY THE

REV. J. VYRNWY MORGAN, D.D.

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EDITOR OF "THE CAMBRO-AMERICAN PULPIT,"
AND "THEOLOGY AT THE DAWN OF
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY"

WITH PORTRAITS

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TO THE MEMORY OF

MY WIFE,

SARAH VYRNWY MORGAN,

WHO PASSED AWAY FROM EARTH
BEHIND THE VEIL INTO THE UNSEEN GLORY
ON 1st JANUARY 1900,
AT
DENVER, COLORADO,
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WHY I DO NOT WRITE A PREFACE

ONE reason why I don't write a Preface is because no one takes the trouble to read it through. Its utility, like the editor's leaderette, has, I am told, fallen out of estimation.

If I wrote one, it would be necessary for me to explain why I have omitted such men as Roger Edwards, Constable Ellis of Llanfairfechan, Rector Griffiths of Merthyr, Professor Morgan, Thomas Jones, Samuel Roberts, and others. The responsibility for the selection made devolves upon myself. It is clear that all Welshmen of note in the Victorian Era could not have been included.

My object has been to present the public with a fair representation of the makers of modern Wales on its religious and literary side. With this purpose in view I have selected certain types of men from every grade and every organisation. In Dr Lewis Edwards, Dr William Rees (Hiraethog), Rev. J. H. Evans (Cynfaen), Rev. R. Ellis (Cynddelw), and Dean Edwards of Bangor, we have the man of genius in each section. In Dr Owen Thomas, Dr Herber Evans, Dr John Thomas of Liverpool, Rev. John Evans (Eglwys Bach), Rev. Evan Thomas of Newport, and Archdeacon Griffiths of Neath, we have the great preacher. In Dr Thomas Charles Edwards and Dr Thomas of Pontypool we have the educationist.

In Dean Howell and Kilsby Jones we have the picturesque Welshman. In Bishop Hughes we have the organiser and administrator.

If I took the trouble to write a Preface, I would be obliged to say that, according to my original plan, there should be four representatives of each religious body, but that, owing to unforeseen difficulties arising from the non-fulfilment, at the last moment, of solemn and sacred pledges, it has not been possible to carry out that plan as effectively as one would wish. Moreover, no Preface would be complete without a declaration of impartiality on the part of the Editor. In this work I know no creed, no sect, no party, no politics. I only know the spirit of brotherhood and appreciation of all who have laboured for the elevation of the Welsh, in knowledge, in morals, in opportunity for service, and in all the elements that distinguish a brave and religious people. Such a conception will, naturally, have no value to those who believe in the "One-stave-is-the-barrel" theory. It was Dr Parker, I believe, who said that we must take the statistics of ten thousand ages before we know the exact value of a day. We cannot truly estimate the forces that have operated in the weal and in the woe of the Principality without taking into account the work and influence of the various religious bodies. In so far as the Mother Church has laboured for a larger humanity and the preservation of the spiritual imagination, I am her devoted follower. In the same sense, and to the same degree, I am a Baptist, a Calvinistic Methodist, a Wesleyan, and a Congregationalist. In the things in which they touch Jesus, I touch them. And there is in his work a mark of unconscious fellowship, which shows

that the principle of sympathy is at work, and that men, even in spite of themselves, are coming closer together. There is likewise evidence of unconscious obedience to sacred purposes, though dimly discerned—dimly discerned through the prejudices of race, of education, and of association—dimly discerned through the limits of the range of knowledge imposed upon us by God Himself. How these men differed in their methods, ideals, moral perceptions, and mental constitution! How seemingly disorganised they were! Yet, there is one dominant line through it all. When looked at from the right perspective, what a glorious pageant they make! Verily, herein is the inspiration of God.

The study of this work in the spirit in which it was conceived and executed will enable the reader to see what grand and chivalrous souls there are in the great Catholic Church of Christ—souls that will stand among the accepted princes of God.

In writing a Preface it would be necessary to inform those who count time by the sectarian clock that such a work is entirely outside their province. They would even tear off the moss from the graves of the mighty dead who did not look at truth and life from the same angle as themselves. They are ever ready with their bayonet to pierce anybody who may differ from them in mode of thought or worship. But when we consider the infinite variation of men's genius, this sectarian attempt to compel all men to see alike in the realm of universal truth is not only useless, but it strikes at the very foundation of that liberty which the sectarian claims as his birthright. There can be no objection to sectarianism so long as it behaves itself. Let there be

as many sects or organisations as there are people who are edified by them.

If I wrote a Preface, I could not refrain from expressing my obligation to those who have written the various articles, also to the men of every class, creed, and politics, who have taken such generous interest in this important work, and especially to Mr Ifano Jones, Welsh librarian, Cardiff, a brilliant young Welshman full of sympathy and of promise.

As for the gentlemen-tasters who sip a little of every book and then tell people whether they relish it or not, I offer them my sincere sympathy.

The denominational paragraphist, who is able to recognise poor stuff when he sees it, because he usually writes such poor stuff himself, will, no doubt, deplore the fact that these sainted dead did not write their own biographies. To present such a work to him would be like reading the Ten Commandments to a roaring bull. When John Dryden was congratulated on the beauty of his "Ode for St Cecilia's Day," he replied: "You are right; a nobler one was never produced, and never will be." "What a genius I had when I wrote that book," was Swift's cry over "A Tale of Tub." But in the preparation and execution of this work, I have been driven to a place where I ought often to be, that is, on the seat of repentance. The troubles of an editor indeed are many. I only ask that the book may be treated on its merits.

In a Preface I would be constrained to make a reference—and a very sympathetic one—to those who may charge me with ignoring the place of the humbler gems in the making of modern Wales. No one appreciates

the preciousness of these gems more than the Editor himself. He was brought up under the ministry of one of them, the Rev. Edward Roberts, Cwmavon, a man of unlimited resources, the discoverer and friend of the celebrated Ieuan Gwynedd, and to whom Ieuan acknowledged his indebtedness in the farewell note which he wrote on the fly-sheet in Payn's "Mental and Moral Philosophy," which he presented to Edward Roberts when the latter left Brecon Memorial College.

However, no Act of Parliament was passed to make these men of imperial qualities what they were. I have taken the host as God has arranged it, and men of lesser lights cannot be any the poorer through the existence of such supremely gifted men. Their achievements are ours. We and they are brethren—fellow-workers and fellow-partakers of the same divine influence and results, though we know it not.

It is not, therefore, for the destruction of creed, or of sect, or of any particular organisation, that this work was taken in hand, but in recognition of God's law of community, and a mutual claim in its brightest benediction. The spirit of association, as Chevalier Bunsen called it fifty years ago, is upon us. There are but few signs of organic union; men still prefer to work on denominational lines, and it has not yet been shown that there is anything to be gained by a union of government.

Under all the gusts and storms of human thought, there is developing a spirit of universal comradeship among believers in God — comradeship in work and worship—the only comradeship that is possible. No wonder Walt Whitman, wrapt in ecstasy with the vision

of the coming union of men, said: "What whispers are these, O lands, running ahead of you, passing under the seas? Are all nations communing? Is there going to be but one heart to the globe?"

J. Vyrnwy Morgan.

127 Claude Road,
Cardiff, 14*th September* 190

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WELSH RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

THE VICTORIAN ERA

WHAT the age of Pericles was to Greece, what that of Louis XIV. was to France, and the beginning of the nineteenth century was to Germany, the Victorian Era was to Wales. It was the era when public opinion—both political and social—was organised for the first time. Feelings and convictions the people had had, but they were afraid to express them. It was the era when Wales was really precipitated into the national mould—the era when the people, as a body, became conscious of the fact that they had a mission in life—a constructive mission, characterised by peace and good will—and were beginning to learn the best methods for its realisation. Not that the sentiment of nationality can be said to be the product of this. Cæsar, Augustine, and Edward I. discovered it, and that in rather an advanced stage. Centuries of wars, bribing, and blandishment failed to crush it. It was in the very blood and sinew of the people. But this sentiment was never organised and expressed on such broad national lines, with such intelligence and such force, as during the period in question.

The ante-Victorian periods are not without their great qualities. In sheer native ability, in understanding, in intellectuality, and in spiritual earnestness, they are comparable to any. For instance, there is the Pulpit. The history of Venice and of Rome, we are told, can be traced by their monuments. What, then, is the most enduring monument to the glory of Wales? Not her philosophy, for little philosophy she has, as such; not her science, for though she has produced several men who have distinguished themselves in the fields of science, philosophy, and philology, it cannot be said that she has produced a natural scientist or a historian of first-class merit. But in pulpit power she stands second to no race since apostolic days. Preaching has filled a higher place in the life of Wales than even in the life of modern England. The standard of preaching is also different. The English sermon is often an essay, or a lecture, or an address—the very antithesis of a Welsh sermon. The nearest parallel to the ideal Welsh sermon that I can think of is the type which prevails among the priests of the modern High Church school. It is a very notable feature in Welsh preaching that the academic and popular elements are intimately blended. In power to move and thrill a mixed audience, a first-class popular Welsh preacher has no rival. He stands alone, for he is a perfect artist in the presentation of his theme. First of all, there is a lucid and intelligent exposition of the text; then the preacher seizes upon some great moving principle; then that principle is gradually unfolded and applied in its various bearings to the different moods, needs, and sins of the hour. At last come the application and peroration. Time is very essential to him. He may need an hour, or more, but he must have it. In sustained flights of imagination Christmas Evans was unequalled. That is unquestioned

and unquestionable. To narrow him down to themes in which certain truths and restraints were needed would be to cripple him. Imagination in him was in a sort of wild and fearful luxuriance. Everything was terrific, even phantasmal, like the visions of the night. For creating new worlds and for depicting cohorts of angels circling through illimitable skies, there was none like him. Yet the man who lived so long on such good terms with the imagination could not always live at peace with concrete humanity. John Elias was master in the art of eloquence, and Williams of the Wern combined in himself the philosopher, the metaphysician, and the marvellous orator. They had no coherent philosophic system of study, and in the modern sense of the term were comparatively uneducated; but those who heard them were struck dumb with surprise. Men and women who had defied every dispensation cried and swooned. In dramatic genius, subtle analytical power, oratorical ability, and the genius to present a theme in a manner adapted to the needs and the temperament of the people, these preachers were perfect artists, and their influence upon the people was almost magical. Then add to this their fidelity to Evangelical principles, their reverence for humanity, their loyalty to Christ, their high and noble character, consistently maintained through the trying circumstances of comparative and even absolute poverty and discomfort—for they were disgracefully paid—their unconscious humility, self-denial, and devotion to the good of their country! Such men would only need one requisition to raise them to the highest rank of heroism—namely, persecution, without which, as Plato observed, no man could ever be exalted above his fellows.

It was in the ante-Victorian period that Sir John Phillips of Picton Castle, and Griffith Jones of Llan-

ddowror, and Madame Bevan, established Welsh charity and circulating schools, which Thomas Charles of Bala in 1785 revived, eventually in 1794 converting them into what is now known as Sunday Schools. But two years previously Morgan John Rhys, of Hengoed, a Baptist minister, had started Sunday Schools in his own neighbourhood, providing a small text-book for their use. Calvinistic Methodism—a most powerful factor in the shaping of Welsh national life—was founded before Victoria ascended the throne, having been constituted a distinct religious body in 1811.

From the date of the annexation of Wales in 1536 to the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne in 1837, Wales gave birth to men and movements of distinction. Sir John Price was a son of the first period; and from his pen, in the year 1546, came our first printed translation of the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. He was a noted antiquarian, and the reputed author of the petition to the throne praying for the annexation of Wales to England. That annexation brought the Welsh into closer touch with the institutions of Norman England; but it did not result in assimilation, notwithstanding the fact that that was the governing principle of all British legislation affecting Wales during that period. The Welsh preserved their language, their religion, and their identity; and their history, which was British up to the sixth century, is their own. The Welsh gentry did what they could to Anglicise themselves by adopting English methods, ideas, and habits, but the masses of the people lived a life of their own; and there are peculiarities in the Welsh character that are worth preserving—devotion, spirituality, imagination, hospitality, talent for religion, and talent for political science.

However, we have chosen the Victorian Era as the basis of this work, because, in a general sense, it stands supreme among all other Welsh eras. It is the halcyon

era of the Principality. We never had such a group of men remarkable for their originality, eloquence, patriotism, knowledge, and force of character—veritable iconoclasts, seers, constructors, up-builders, ice-cutters. To read such a list of great worthies is enough to take away the breath of men who are simply endowed with nothing beyond the ordinary form of intellectual force.

It was also an era of greater elevation. Stormier eras there have been—the era of John Penry the martyr, and that of Howell Harris, the Boanerges of the eighteenth century Revival; the era of the sword and the protracted strife for independence; the era of intrigue and insurrection; the era of inter-tribal strifes, that affected not only the prospects and destiny of the people, but also their morals, in that they engendered general disregard for social order, produced open defiance of all authority, and made the people unmindful even of the decencies of civilised life.

Broadly speaking, the Victorian Era stands out with peculiar brilliancy. It is more pregnant with great events. There is a larger unfolding of intelligence among the common people, and a more general awakening of the higher feelings of the nation. Not that the beginnings of the modern higher life of Wales can be traced to it; they are to be found early in the seventeenth century, strengthened and intensified later on in the first and immediately succeeding religious revivals, which practically revolutionised the country—revivals which cannot be interpreted merely as manifestations of Dissent, but as the new birth of a nation's intellectual life. The Victorian Era was practically the era of the inauguration of the Welsh newspaper press. It is true that, as early as 1814, a most laudable attempt was made by that noble and enlightened patriot, the Rev. Joseph Harris ("Gomer"), of Swansea, to run a Welsh newspaper, called *Seren Gomer*, which, after the issue of eighty-five weekly

numbers, and the loss of £1,000 to the editor and the publisher (David Jenkins), was suspended, to be re-started as a magazine in 1818; but when, in 1843, Dr William Rees ("Gwilym Hiraethog") started to edit and issue *Yr Amserau* (*The Times*), Welsh newspaper journalism began in grim earnest—soon to be a tremendous power in politics and social economy. Then the pen actually took the place of the sword, and literature became the battlefield of the people. The struggle for the vindication of the learning and genius of the race was substituted for the struggle for independence. The Victorian Era marks the earliest statutory recognition of the Welsh language in civil affairs. Ten days after her accession—30th June 1837—Queen Victoria signed a bill which sanctioned the substitution of Welsh for English in the words of the declaration and contract which made marriage legal in Wales. It was during her reign that Bishop Hughes of St Asaph, the father of the present Bishop of Llandaff, was appointed—the first Welsh-speaking Bishop for a period of 150 years; a man who did honour to his country and nation. It was also during her reign that the first Welsh-speaking judge was appointed, in the person of Judge Gwilym Williams, and events have amply justified the step. During this period the resuscitated National Eisteddfod brought about the great modern revival of the Welsh language. It was a period when the control of Parliamentary representation and the direction of public affairs were transferred from the hands of the Whigs and the nobility to the hands of the people. In that era there arose a new set of men, and there came into existence a new kind of life. There was a breaking up of the old austerer virtues, and a deterioration in the tough, good old fibre of the people; there was also a gradual softening of the strict discipline of the old Puritan ideal. In matters of food and clothing the Welshman fell from the simplicity of his old and long-

lived ancestors. He cared less for spoon food and for clothing made of home-spun cloth and coloured flannel. He began to leave his rural retreat for the great city, and to take his share in the battle for bread, power, and politics. He looked with longing eyes to the great seats of learning in England, that he might equip and place himself on a more equal footing with his enterprising Saxon neighbour. A nation that has few moments of contact with other nations cannot expect to grow and to increase in wisdom and in knowledge. True grandeur of mind comes by association. The preservation of our identity as a people is an object worthy of attention and of sacrifice, for though we lack some of the qualities which distinguish other nations, we have attributes which they have not; but this preservation cannot be secured by isolation. Let us preserve our speciality of character, but let us strengthen and refine it by contact with other minds and other movements. This policy of detachment has been an expensive one for the Welsh. It has checked their progress as a people for many generations. Nonconformity, while it means separation from all state patronage and endowment, cannot surely mean social narrowness, intellectual separation, and obscurity. It is in this matter that we notice a very encouraging change in the trend of Welsh life and thought in the Victorian Era. The consciousness seems to have grown, not only upon the leaders, but upon the great masses of the people, that power, success, and achievement could not come in the old way, but by fellowship. And among the good omens of the Victorian Era there stands out this one omen in bold and grand relief—the breaking up of old racial antipathies and prejudices; the emancipation of the people from the old grooves in which they had lived.

There came also a change over the pulpit life of Wales. The preaching of the fan, of the axe, and of eternal

torment, which undoubtedly did much for the emancipation and purification of the people in the earlier stages of their life, gave way to preaching of a more tender and winning kind. As to higher criticism, its influence is *nil*. Moreover, there was a change of conception regarding the function of the pulpit. Ministers began to identify themselves with questions of general interest. They emphasised the symptoms of social disquietude. They echoed, and in many instances actually initiated, the cry for better laws, better social conditions, greater liberty, and a larger measure of self-government; so that to be a Nonconformist practically meant to be a Liberal. They were intensely conservative in matters of theology and religion, but grew daily more radical in the region of political science. The only sects that did not assume the political *rôle* were the Calvinistic Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodists, and they remain to this day the least political.

It may be stated that the trend of much of the work and preaching of the modern pulpit in Wales is socialistic in character, and indirectly political. One might ask, and that to some purpose, "What has become of Hell?" "What has become of Heaven?" There is not only a change of conception, but a change of attention. The people are being urged to concentrate their mind upon the material side of their life. It is not a very common thing among the younger generation of Welsh preachers to make strong personal references to such men as Mr Chamberlain and Mr Balfour. Such conduct reminds one of the monk who was so enraged at that remarkable satirical work entitled "Encomium Moriæ," or "Praise of Folly," written by Erasmus, that he went to the extent of buying a picture of Erasmus, and hanging it up in his study that he might daily have the pleasure of spitting at it.[1] This protest,

[1] These patriots and statesmen have rendered their country distinguished services, and should be treated with respect.

we are told, is the voice of conscience, and silence would be criminal. Yes, and angels turn away in disgust because it is partisanship and politics ; and instead of standing up for the right, in the inspiration of malignant passion, and indeed in every moral result, it is standing up for the devil. The Church has tried conscience for many generations, and it has given us about one hundred and fifty denominations, marking its path with blood and more separations than even civil governments. But there are many consciences : there is the æsthetical conscience, the superstitious, the conceited, the obstinate and despotic. But there is none more unmanageable, perhaps, and capable of such rudeness, as the conceited conscience ; it becomes a law to itself, and excommunicates by criticism. But there is a rule of decency even in controversy. We may believe that a public man is mistaken in his views. We may believe that he is inconsistent with his former self, and that he does not have sufficient regard for our views and convictions ; but we have no right to utilise a privileged position in order to cast discredit upon his name, especially when those who differ from us have no opportunity to reply. The greater our charity, the stronger our position. Indeed, catholicity demands difference of opinion and judgment as the basis of the condition of its charity. Dignified opposition is manly, and often necessary, but it should be dignified. Morcover, every man speaks according to his quality. As to the question of utilising the pulpit for the discussion of social and political problems, there can be no doubt of one thing, that the man who indulges in it cannot do it long with impunity. Men like Dr John Clifford and Dr Aked may be trusted to deal with labour, social, and economic questions, for the reason that they understand them, and have the ability to present them in an intelligent manner with a conscience void of offence. Not that the gift of preaching in Wales is dead or smothered. We have to-day men of whom no Welshman need ever be

ashamed, preachers of high quality. To name them would be invidious. They are known throughout the length and breadth of the land. But the history of the gift of preaching is, that it may be weak in one generation, and strong in the next. In the Victorian Era we had greater preachers in greater numbers. There was a larger percentage of strong and breezy personalities—personalities that illumined, enkindled, invigorated, and called forth the best energies of the people.

The late President of the Welsh Congregational Union, in his address from the chair at Tredegar, made the following observation :—

"The time had passed when the minister was, from compulsion, the teacher, the lawyer, the editor, and the political leader; but there still remained work for him. The pulpit of the future must be a live pulpit, with a suitable message for the want of the soul. Men were beginning to ask themselves why it was considered their duty to waste valuable time listening to weak, pointless, soulless addresses simply because they were called sermons, and delivered from a pulpit. Could it be denied that hundreds of men went through exercises every Sunday that it would be mockery to call it preaching? The language was grammatical, the style perfect, and the doctrine true, but the sermon contained no food for the hungry. If they were to secure listeners, the sermons must be worth listening to, with the strength of truth and sympathy. Such live sermons lost none of their power through the formal changes in the mode of thinking; but men refused to believe that they served God by punishing themselves by listening to sermons that touched no heart-string, which helped them not in their struggle against evil, simply because the preacher was in a pulpit, and took his text from the Bible."

He was speaking to a Welsh audience, composed very largely of the ministerial element, and though his remarks were no doubt intended to bear a general interpretation,

they had special reference to the Welsh ministry of the present day. This rebuke is very much needed, for there is a good deal of surface quality about the Welsh pulpit of to-day.

The Victorian Era was also marked by considerable growth in popular liberty. The Burials Amendment Act gave Nonconformist ministers the right of burying their own dead. The vicar of the parish became less of an oracle, though many a one had, under the old dispensation, been a source of great help and comfort to the poor and illiterate of the land. Parliamentary representation was extended, and the people were given the protection of a secret ballot. The Parish and District Council Act divested of much of their power the old vestry meetings that were annually held, and at which the vicar of the parish presided. We had our Board Schools, our Intermediate Schools, and the three University Colleges, with the University Senate composed of the teaching staff of the colleges. The expenses of the students of these colleges are small compared with those of Oxford and Cambridge. Those who go to these universities as unattached, for the sake of economy, would do very much better if they came to our Welsh University Colleges. The Victorian Era will ever remain a memorable one in the history of Welsh education. The circular letter of Sir Hugh Owen, dated 26th August 1843, was an epoch-making one. It resulted in the appointment of two commissioners by the British School Society—the one for the North, and the other for the South of Wales—to visit those districts where a desire had been expressed for such schools, and to render all available assistance. So that by 1846 not less than 7,654 children were receiving instruction in the British Schools. In the same year, and through the instrumentality of Sir Hugh Owen, the Cambrian Educational Society was formed, which was regarded as a Welsh branch of the British and Foreign School Society. Its chief object was

to safeguard the rights of Nonconformists in Wales with regard to education.

In the same year Mr William Williams, M.P. for Coventry, induced the House of Commons to appoint a commission to enquire into the state of education in Wales, and the facilities for working-men to acquire a knowledge of English. The result of their enquiries was published in 1847, and it may be said that generations will elapse before the effect of that Report upon the nation will be forgotten. It demonstrated the deplorable fact that, out of a population of 1,045,958 for Wales and Monmouth, no more than 80,361 children in the whole of the four dioceses attended school. The enquiry became known among the Welsh people as "The Treason of the Blue Books" ("Brad y Llyfrau Gleision"). In that valuable work called "The Welsh People," jointly written by Dr John Rhys of Oxford and Mr Brynmor Jones, K.C., M.P., we note the following in regard to this enquiry: "Temporarily, perhaps, the cause of Welsh education was prejudiced by the introduction of sectarian and social questions into their reports; but, on the whole, the very fact that attention was drawn to the state of education in Wales in a very forcible manner was ultimately productive of good."

It is hardly too much to say that the chief event in the special history of Wales during the last fifty years has been the modern educational movement, which has culminated in the system now existing, and which may be traced directly to the agitation produced by the observations of the commissioners.

With regard to the present system, the nation owes a debt of gratitude to such men as Dr Lewis Edwards of Bala, also Dr Thomas Charles Edwards, the late David Davies, Esq., M.P., of Llandinam, and chiefly to Sir Hugh Owen. Space does not permit us to give a detailed account of Sir Hugh Owen's efforts in connection with

the Aberystwyth University College, which was opened in November 1872. We only quote what his biographer says:

"Without Sir Hugh Owen, the college at Aberystwyth might never have been established, without him it most certainly would never have been maintained. At one period the gloom of impending extinction gathered thick around it. Its best friends began to fear for the future, and it became evident that, unless somebody would take upon his shoulders the burden of providing the college with funds, the closing of its door was only a question of time. In this dark hour Sir Hugh Owen stepped forward, abandoned his position in the Civil Service, and devoted his time to this work. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that to Sir Hugh Owen Wales owes the existence of the college at Aberystwyth."

It may be said that the educational system of Wales at the present moment is nearer perfection than any other in Great Britain. This wonderful movement began among the people themselves. It is a proof of the love of the Welsh people for education.

Mr Gladstone, speaking at Nottingham, in 1877, made the following observations:—

"Let me point to another case with which I am personally acquainted, to show you that wherever primary education is loved, the higher education must be loved and taught also. With no assistance at all from any public fund of any kind, they (the people of Wales) have within the last five or six years founded a large and important college at Aberystwyth. Is it possible for you to have a stronger proof that the existence of a love for primary education does lead on, and must lead on, to every great effort for the establishment of higher education?"

Since those words were spoken, the great scheme of secondary education has taken firm root in the Principality, and is now crowned by the establishment of the Welsh University.

In connection with this educational movement we observe another remarkable change. I refer to the change which came over the scope and character of the Welsh ministry during the era. The Pulpit in Wales had been charged with having neglected the culture of the national character. But we must take into consideration that Rowlands of Llangeitho, Howell Harris and others, had to take the people as they found them—in a state of comparative ignorance, superstition, and sin. Their first duty was to evangelise. The duty of caring for the culture of the national character fell into the hands of such men as Dr Lewis Edwards of Bala, Dr William Rees ("Hiraethog"), Dr Thomas Charles Edwards, and others. They did not confine their work to what is generally termed religious work; they became educators. As the great statesmen and great scholars of the Middle Ages were mostly ecclesiastical men, so it may be said that the pioneers of education in the Victorian Era in the Principality of Wales were largely found among the preachers of the Gospel. They led the way in the press, in the founding of schools, and in the preservation of social order; thus they opened up fresh avenues of usefulness and eminence for promising young Welshmen. The pulpit had for generations drawn to itself the best intellect of the nation. It was practically the only sphere in which a Welshman could distinguish himself. Now all this is changed, and the historian of the twentieth century will have a different tale to tell. This change becomes more wonderful still when we take into consideration the condition of things at the beginning of the Victorian Era. Commerce in Wales was in a low condition; political feeling was well-nigh unknown; literature, except the purely denominational form of it, was dormant; such also was the case with regard to poetry; no newspaper could exist; efficient day schools were few. People got their news from ballad-singers at

fairs and markets, and from stocking-sellers and flannel-weavers. These latter made their rounds twice a year about May and September. If any one desired to see the doctor, or the lawyer, or the squire, the most likely place to find him was in the public-house.

Who and what were the schoolmasters? They were men of little education or culture of any kind. There were no colleges in which masters could be trained, and any one in the shape of a man was deemed fit to teach children. Some of these masters were old soldiers, who had returned from war with a broken leg or arm, or with one eye missing; others were broken-down butchers, clerks, and shopkeepers, their only recommendation being that they had failed at almost everything else. And what was the character of the buildings in which these schools were held? As a rule, they were old, dilapidated houses, with any and every kind of roofing, and with nothing but the bare, cold earth to stand upon; there were no desks nor books. The children had to turn their forms into desks, and to write in their spelling-books while kneeling on the damp, cold earth. There were no maps; and the children knew no more about geography than a shepherd's dog knew about the difference between a sovereign and a five-shilling piece. The schools were often held in chapels and churches, without fire, or ventilation or any conveniences. Now there is not a single parish without a daily and a Sunday School or schools. These represent over 34 per cent. of the population. So far as religious knowledge is concerned, the Welsh, taken as a body of people, are, with the exception of the Scotch, the best-informed in Christendom. There are over 12,000 books in the Welsh language to-day, and among them there is not a single original sceptical or infidel work. There is one translation of a sceptical character, but it has had no sale; it has to be given away. There are about 30 weekly newspapers in the Welsh language,

with a circulation of at least 50,000 per week. There are about 35 monthly periodicals, and several quarterly and bi-monthly reviews. Welsh readers to-day spend £200,000 per annum on strictly Welsh literature; not on daily papers or novels, but on solid literature. Besides, they support two English morning papers, six English evening papers, and over eighty English weeklies.

Another striking change which came over the Welsh during the Victorian Era was in the character of their patriotism. Hitherto it had been retrospective. When the poet sang, he sang of bygone days. His poetry voiced a very remote emotion, full of vague regret and sad longings, and occasionally with a tinge of vindictiveness about it far removed from life and the considerations of life. However prosaic his present, he had a heroic past —Howell Dda, Llewelyn, Owen Glyndwr, and John Penry. Its tendency, if not its aim, was to preserve the old martial spirit of his ancestors, to foster the exclusive disposition so characteristic of the nation. There was a consciousness of defeat, and a lingering desire to avenge it; and when he sang, it was in the minor key. But in the Victorian Era his patriotism assumed a prospective hue—the onward look was substituted for the backward one. He began to think of the golden days to come, he began to reflect upon the possibilities of his people, and to feel that, on the whole, connection with the British Empire was not altogether a curse.

True, the symbol of Great Britain is a lion. Men have considered that the symbol that typifies the national life should be borrowed from animal violence, but it cannot be justly denied that the tendency and effect of British religion, British literature, and British policy, on the whole, has been to develop a higher nationality everywhere. The British, better than any other people, have solved the problem of uniting individualism with organisation. On their colonies and their possessions around the earth the

British have bestowed a government which has been conducive to their growth and enlightenment. Great Britain stands as no other country stands in relation to the great families of men. She is the peer of the most powerful empires, bound to guard her heritage, and to transmit its blessings to others. She is the sovereign of weaker tribes, obligated to develop latent human forces. Again, she stands as the mother of many daughters, loyal in their affection. To her is given the task, so far-reaching and so complex, of moulding new worlds into sober freedom, not by right of control, but by educational and spiritual quickening. Her only rival is the United States of America; but in that wonderful land, so vast in territory and so boundless in resources, liberty is more in name than in reality. Her judicial system is corrupt and oppressive. Her cities are the worst governed in the world Justice is more of a theoretical than of a practical quality. They sadly lack in the genius for colonisation. The miners of Pennsylvania are serfs compared with British miners. Qualification for service is political, not personal. Booker Washington, a distinguished orator, educationalist, and philanthropist in America, can secure accommodation only in two or three hotels all over the American continent, and even then is not allowed to dine in public rooms, and that on account of the colour of his skin; still, a large and an increasing section of the American people, both North and South, are inclined to grant the negroes some share in the development and guidance of their national life. What has Mr James Bryce, M.P., to say to the common disregard of parental authority, and to the increasing tendency to exaggerate individualism even to the point of lawlessness? Then, what about the ease with which American people can procure divorces? And, what is worse still, there seems to be no common demand for a remedy, and no apparent statesmanship capable of supplying that remedy. Upon the question of re-marriage

of divorced parties, the American State utters no voice. These scandals, which have brought such disgrace upon the American people, must and will remain until the Constitution of the United States is so amended that Congress can legislate, and the Federal Courts alone adjudicate upon the matter.

In Great Britain, notwithstanding all her faults, there is more personal, social, and political freedom than in any country on the surface of the earth, and it would be vain to contest the fact that Wales has gained more than she has lost by her connection with the British Empire, and our people are beginning to realise the truth of the situation. Two great forces have been at work—centripetal and centrifugal. The more autonomous Wales becomes, the more loyal she is to the throne. And the old idea that democracy is incompatible with monarchical government has practically disappeared from the imagination of the people. This does not imply that there is to be any abatement in the demand for the recognition of every distinctive Wesh ideal, aspiration, and characteristic. The conflict will be maintained, and Wales to-day is in a better position than at any previous stage in her history to enforce her rights, and the sooner our statesmen recognise this the better.

Italy and Germany became one, not by an oppressive and artificial uniformity, but by a many-sided federal unity. English statesmen have for generations laboured under the mistaken notion that all people within the jurisdiction of the British Empire ought to be content to be governed by, and conform to, purely English ideas. But in the reign of the late Queen there was a change. Whereas the Welsh people in previous time had been content with their lot, during the middle and the latter half of the era they seemed to become conscious of their identity and of their mission, and

began to claim in a constitutional manner that the distinctive life of Wales should not only be fostered by the people themselves, but should obtain governmental recognition.

To-day we claim for Wales representation on the Royal Shield, Standard, and currency of the United Kingdom. Wales is the only nation in Europe that has no distinctive blazon to exhibit to the world. There is room for it on the Royal Standard. The sign Welshmen task for is Arthur's dragon, or Rhodri's lions. They claim that either one of these should stand beside the chosen ensigns of the other three nations composing the United Kingdom. It is not an unreasonable request; and it is asked as a pledge of peace and loyalty to an ancient foe, as well as an acknowledgment of the distinctive identity of the Welsh people. There is going on in Wales at the present moment a strong agitation for the recognition of Wales as an integral unit, requiring separate treatment in legislation and administration. For this change in the quality of Welsh patriotism, our gratitude is due to the men who form the subjects of the articles in this book, and also to such men as the Rev. Walter Davies ("Gwallter Mechain"), the Rev. T. Price ("Carnhuanawc"), Henry Richard, Thomas Ellis, and others. If patriotism is to bring forth worthy fruit, it must ally itself with reason, and walk in the path of duty. Patriotism is an imaginative as well as a moral quality, and without imagination it will always be of a sordid and melancholy kind. The thoughtful patriot, while looking back on history, will not only discern the wrong and the accidental confusion, but he will also discover the latent meaning and providential purpose; and under the influence of such discernment, petty resentment and gloomy contemplations will give place to a sounder love of country, and a passion for its advancement in education and knowledge. The true patriot cannot forget the past, but he remembers only to

teach the lessons it bequeathes, and not to forge bolts of vengeance upon irresponsible heads. For this reason we welcome the change that has come over Welsh patriotism, for it has grown to see the faults and failures of the nation, and in what respect it can be trained and educated for the destiny that is in store for it. Not that we expect the Welsh, as a race, to attain to a very great distinction in war and in imperial power; but there are ample proofs that, by proper training, and under wise leaders, the Welsh people, with all their superior appreciation of poetry, music, religion, liberty, and education, are bound to make a substantial contribution towards the production and formation of that finished race of men, composed of every nation's best, which ethnological science has ventured to predict shall, sooner or later, make its appearance.

Among the changes which took place in the sphere of religion, it is impossible to ignore the Presbyterianising of Independency. Long and bitter was the controversy between the advocates of the old form of Independency and the advocates of what is termed Congregationalism, and which is more or less synonymous with Presbyterianism. S. R. (Samuel Roberts), J. R. (John Roberts), and G. R. (Griffith Roberts)—three noted brothers of wonderful ability and strong convictions—fought for the individual right of each church. Mozart said of Handel, "When he chooses, he can strike like a thunderbolt." So when these men protested and fought, they stirred the denomination to its very depths; while, on the other hand, Dr John Thomas of Liverpool, a man of unblemished character and remarkable attainments, led the opposite side. He and his followers went in for organised Congregationalism, while J. R. fought for the old Independent position—individualism, with the unity of the spirit. But the fortunes of war, however, went in favour of Presbyterianism in Independency. The Welsh Independent Churches and

ministry during the latter part of the Victorian Era lost much of their distinctive character, and became more and more Presbyterianised in tone, form, and administration; they are now less individual, and more collective. As regards the English Congregational Churches in Wales, composed chiefly of those members of Welsh Churches who prefer to worship in what is to them the more familiar Saxon tongue, they have practically given up their independent, individual position, and are lost in county and denominational organisations. Whereas it used to be a cardinal principle in the Congregational Churches of Wales that the final authority in matters of morals, policy, and organisation was invested in the individual church, it has come to pass that the quarterly meeting, the association, and the union have by degrees, and in various ways, divested the churches of much of their individual rights. In this controversy between the old and the new school—a controversy which oftentimes degenerated into the most scandalous enmities—many a reputation was clouded, and some of the leading parties fell short, sadly short, of the standard they had set up for the moral measurement of others. Henry Ward Beecher, who probably shook hands with more people than any man during the nineteenth century, was a great believer in the completeness and sufficiency of every local church for all its economies. Speaking once in London he said: "I believe in the common sense of common people, and, above all, in the common sense of Christ's called, that they are able to take care of anything that needs care in the local church; that they can do it better than any one else can do it for them." To seek advice in times of trial is commendable, but to forfeit one's liberty of action in deference to organised opinion is to strike at the root of the fundamental principles of local freedom and independence. But the argument of the new school was that the tendency of the times was towards combination and central authority, and

there seemed to be some fateful power working in that direction.[1]

With regard to the progress of temperance in Wales, it should be stated that the organised temperance movement reached the Principality a few years before the Victorian Era. While the total abstinence cause did not have its existence in Wales, its chief features have throughout been peculiarly Welsh. Several town societies were formed in the early '30's, a few of which continue to this day. The old Gwent a Morgannwg Society appears to have been the first attempt at the formation of a provincial organisation. This society fell asleep for a time, but was resuscitated in 1885 as the South Wales and Monmouthshire Temperance Association. The most prominent workers in connection with the revived organisation were—Ald. Thomas Williams, J.P., Merthyr (first president); Mr Henry Phillips, J.P., Newport; Mr W. L. Daniel, Merthyr (present president); Rev. W. I. Morris, Pontypridd; Dr John Pugh, Cardiff; and the Rev. Morris Morgan, Swansea (secretary). The North Wales Temperance Association during later years became a power for good in the Northern Counties under the guidance of the late Rev. J. Eiddon Jones, Bangor (secretary).

The United Kingdom Alliance, which was formed in Manchester in 1853 to deal with the legislative aspect of the movement, carried its operations into Wales by subsidising local societies and appointing its own representatives, among whom might be named the Rev. Richard Jones, Llanidloes; Mr W. Thomas, Bangor; Plenydd (Mr H. J. Williams), in the North; and Dr Amos Scholfield, Councillor E. Beavan, J.P., and the Rev. J. Tertius Phillips, in the South.

[1] The Baptist body in Wales is really the most independent of all the bodies, though there is a strong movement to Presbyterianise it. So far, however, the old school has held its ground, but the probability is, that the juggernaut of the hour will eventually crush it.

Early in 1871 the Good Templar Order was introduced into Wales. For many years it was a great power in the land, and it still wields a wide influence. Some of the best temperance reformers in Wales were trained in connection with this order. Good Templary had much to do in bringing about the passing of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, so well steered through the House of Commons by the late Mr John Roberts, M.P., father of Mr J. Herbert Roberts, who is known as "The Temperance Member for Wales."

The temperance benefit societies, the Independent Order of Rechabites, and the Independent Order of the Sons of Temperance, have been most successful in teaching thrift to the people. Two Welshmen—Mr Councillor T. Jones Parry, of Clydach, Abergavenny, and Mr Fred W. Brett, of Cardiff—have held the highest office in the kingdom in the first-named order.

The Blue Ribbon Movement in the '80's swept through the country, and added thousands to the ranks of teetotalers. As a result of this wave, many temperance societies were formed in connection with the churches, the leading denominations eventually forming their own organisations, much to the joy of such early pioneers of the movement as the Rev. D. Phillips, Swansea; Dr John Thomas, Liverpool; Dr Abel J. Parry, and others. Bands of Hope and later organisations, such as the British Women's Temperance Association, the North Wales Women's Temperance Union, the South Wales Women's Temperance Union, led by the indomitable Cranogwen, and the Commercial Temperance League, have all helped to place Wales in a position to demand still further temperance legislation, in advance of and separate from the other parts of the kingdom.

This review would not be complete without special reference to the revival of the historic spirit in Wales. This movement cannot be said to be a distinctly Welsh

movement, neither can it be said to be English. It is really of German origin, but the fact that Wales has taken it up so energetically is another proof of the emancipation of the Welsh intellect from its old, narrow, and exclusive groove. There is not only a desire, but a determination to get at the facts of Welsh history, irrespective of sentiment and tradition. All history is difficult, but Welsh history is exceptionally so. Indeed, down to the present century, myth and imaginative narration have characterised the most precious literatures, not only Welsh, but history in general. Lately, however, it has become more realistic. Now even fiction is photographic in quality. Theory and speculation are almost universally discredited. Broad and hasty generalisations from few particulars excite nothing but ridicule and contempt. There is a melancholy uncertainty about the early history and movements of the Kymry, but we have a body of men to-day who are prosecuting the work of historical research in a scientific spirit, with the view of eliminating all superstition, exaggeration, and tradition. For evidence of the existence of this historic spirit, we refer to Professor J. E. Lloyd's books on the early history of the Principality; the researches of Dr Gwenogfryn Evans; the series of classical works published by the Guild of Graduates of our new university; "The Wars of Edward I.," by John Morris, M.A.; papers on the Puritan and Evangelical movements in Wales, by the Rev. T. Shankland, Welsh Librarian of Bangor; and principally to the works of that distinguished scholar and philologist, Dr John Rhys, Principal of Jesus College, Oxford. Mr O. M. Edwards, M.A., of Oxford, has also made a very substantial contribution to this movement. So has Professor Anwyl, M.A., of Aberystwyth. Mention must also be made of the works of Mr J. Romilly Allen on Celtic art, and to the vast mass of lore collected in the "Archæologia Cambrensis," 1845 to date.

We cannot ignore the Disestablishment question in Wales. It does not at the present moment occupy the place it once did, and the historic or philosophic explanation of this fact is to be found, on the religious side, in the wonderful effect of the Oxford Movement upon Welsh life and thought. That movement was a God-send to the Established Church in Wales, for the clergy became increasingly active and useful. They abounded in works of charity, and gave a wonderful impetus to projects of a humanitarian character. Their devoted and unselfish efforts made an impression upon the minds and hearts of the people, and softened the asperity with which Welshmen had regarded the Church. One of the objects of the Oxford Movement was to make the services of the Church more æsthetic, more devotional, and to regain the confidence and affection of the people, and in this it certainly succeeded. It appealed to their imagination, and produced a revival of the romantic spirit. To a very great degree it nullified the efforts of the Disestablishment party. The Rev. Constable Ellis, M.A., of Llanfairfechan, was among the first to be influenced by this movement. His example was followed by a great number of the younger generation of the clergy, and to-day there are signs that it has worked its way into some of the most isolated and exclusive parts of the country. It had the effect of restoring order and dignity to the form of worship in the Episcopalian Church. It also greatly encouraged the æsthetic and ceremonial element, though the old Evangelical spirit was nobly and faithfully preserved within the Church by the attitude and influence of such men as Dean Howell of Wrexham, Rev. John Griffiths of Merthyr, and Archdeacon Griffiths of Neath. The late Dean Edwards of Bangor, the great champion and defender of the Church in that era, was a man noted for his spirituality, and possessed great intellectual attainments. His ideal was to *sing* the Church back into the heart of the Welsh nation, and

this ideal he prosecuted with vigour, intelligence, and enthusiasm worthy of himself and the great historic Church of which he was such a distinguished ornament; and it gives us pleasure to bear testimony to the fact that in the mother Church in Wales to-day there is a body of intellectual and high-souled men, who are a credit to the Establishment and to the country. Still, one would wish that they were, as a body, better informed, especially as to Wales and her people. Very few books they buy and read. There is no doubt that the majority of the clergy are becoming more national in their sympathies; and there is a growing disposition to give preferment to Welsh-speaking clergymen. As one evidence of this we need but quote the words of the Archdeacon of St Asaph, the Venerable David Evans, in his visitation charge at Ruthin lately. Referring to the present Revival, he said:—

"It was a work that demanded not only sympathy, but their prayers. Was the Church to remain inactive? Were they to repeat the mistakes of the past, and in silent self-sufficiency to ignore the force of popular movements? By ignoring similar movements in times gone by the Church had lost influence with the masses, and Nonconformists had swept in many of their adherents. In the unaltering system of their worship many people had failed to find what their souls desired, and consequently turned to other pastures. There had been neglect of opportunity, indifference to religious sentiments, and too much readiness to shelter themselves under the limitations imposed by the Church's constitutional orders. The time had come for discovering, if possible, some method of service which was not out of harmony with the settled order of their Church. They should not relinquish discipline, that was certain; but it was equally certain that the toleration of freedom under the ægis of ordered rule was not only possible and beneficial, but actually necessary, unless they were to lose more ground. He acknowledged

that there were different opinions respecting the Revival, like everything else. The question was: How was the Church at large to act in the face of all that? His advice was: Countenance and guide it, and leave the result to God. If the congregation desired special means, such as extempore prayer meetings, singing Psalms and hymns, and exhorting one another, let them grant them. St Paul became all things to all men that he might save some."

But the friends of the Oxford Movement went too far. Not content with what they had already achieved, they began to meddle with the question of education, and that to their own detriment. There came a reaction, and the people began to revolt; whether rightly or wrongly, they came to feel that with the Church it was only a question of opportunity, and there are appearances that in a very short time the question of Disestablishment in Wales will again be prosecuted with vigour and enthusiasm. Then, on the political side, Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill did much to kill the Disestablishment Movement in the Principality. It is with reverence and affection that we desire to speak of that great and wonderful character. Welshmen had unbounded faith in his integrity and statesmanship, and their loyalty on the Home Rule question was more of a compliment to Mr Gladstone himself than of a belief in the wisdom and practicability of the measure. Indeed, very few of them understood it. It will never be known how much many a noble minister now lying under the green grass suffered in comfort and circumstances on account of his loyalty to Mr Gladstone during that memorable period. However, there was a reaction. The people began to realise that Mr Gladstone himself was not sound on the question of Disestablishment, and that, while he made use of the Welsh vote to further the interest of his own

administration, he gave Wales but little in return for that vote. In addition to this, there was a serious loss of confidence in the Irish Party, and that section of the Principality—by no means a mean section—that stood faithful to Mr Chamberlain in his attitude on the question felt more and more that they were justified in the course they had taken. The more the Irish got, the more they wanted; and they were entirely devoid, not only of the spirit of loyalty to Great Britain, but also of the element of gratitude. If the Liberal Party to-day were to appeal to the Welsh nation on the question of Home Rule, they would be sadly disconcerted. Moreover, the attitude of the Irish Party on the important question of education has convinced the nation that everything with them is a question of politics, and that they support that party that best serves their interest and the interest of Roman Catholicism. The Evangelical spirit is as strong to-day in Wales as ever it was. The people will have nothing to do with priestcraft of any kind. But Roman Catholicism has won this signal triumph: it has succeeded in enlisting the Protestant sentiment of liberty on behalf of itself and its methods.

With regard to Welsh music in this era, it did not play a very important part in the moulding of Welsh national life, but it would be an injustice to entirely ignore it. Before the Victorian Era, music in Wales was at a very low ebb, and practically nothing had been done to place it on its present level. The men who did most for the cultivation of the art of music, and to create national interest in it were the Mills family of Llanidloes, Ieuan Gwyllt, Ambrose Lloyd, Rev. Edward Stephens ("Tanymarian"), Owain Alaw, Mr Brinley Richards, J. D. Jones, and Dr Joseph Parry. Ieuan Gwyllt's Welsh hymnal did immense service in

this direction. His criticisms and adjudications in various parts of the country were no mean factors in lifting Welsh music from its obscurity and inefficiency. During this era the first Welsh oratorio, entitled the "Storm of Tiberias," by the Rev. Edward Stephens ("Tanymarian"), was produced; also the first Welsh opera, called "Blodwen," by Dr Joseph Parry. Dr Parry, who flourished in the two last decades of the era, was the most prolific composer of them all, and in some sense the most distinguished. He practically wrote in all musical forms, and his works were more largely rehearsed than those of any other Welsh musical composer. His productions are very numerous, some of them possessing very great merit, although unequal. In hymn-tunes and anthems the Welsh compare very favourably, and in this branch Ambrose Lloyd stands pre-eminent. Taking as the basis of our comparisons, the quality, volume, and balance of tone, keeping the pitch, intonation, accent, expression, articulation, attack, and general conceptions of any given production, Welsh choral singing will stand comparison with that of any country.

The weak point in the musical life of Wales has been the confinement of the people to one particular class of music—viz., the preparation of Handelian choruses for competition. During the last few years, however, they have taken a broader outlook, and dozens of choirs are giving annual performances of complete modern works; and it is clear that in this their power and salvation lies.

Another drawback that should be noticed is the fact that, during the Victorian Era, choirs were taught by conductors who knew very little more than the choristers did. It is hardly necessary to say that there were exceptions, and some very notable ones, among them being Caradog, Eos Morlais, and Silas Evans. Now we have

professional men, trained and educated in this particular department.

The Victorian Era in Wales was richi n vocal artistes; among the best and most distinguished were Madame Edith Wynne, Mrs Mary Davies, Eos Morlais, Llew Llwyfo, Lucas Williams, Lewis Thomas, Ben Davies, and Ffrangcon Davies.

It is gratifying to note that of late years considerable attention has been paid to instrumental music. Singing in Wales to-day, taking all the points into consideration, is superior to anything that the past can show. The fact that the best English choirs have come to compete at our National Eisteddfods has been the means of calling attention to the weak point in Welsh choral singing—viz., lack of technique. The Welsh have their strong points—points, indeed, that are unrivalled. No better voices could be found; then they have emotionalism and enthusiasm, though they may be lacking in restraint. Sir Walter Parratt, speaking at the National Eisteddfod held at Mountain Ash in the month of August of this year, confessed himself astonished at the quality and amount of material to be found in Wales. There were, he added, hardly any among the contestants he had heard at the preliminary competitions whom the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music would not be proud to have. Such material, he said, could not possibly be found in England.

We are grateful to Sir Walter Parratt for his compliment; but what has he been doing all these years not to have known all that before? Mr Edward German, on the same occasion, advised the Welsh to look over the walls of their own beautiful garden at what other people are doing. We agree, but with this addition: Let the Englishman practise what he preaches. There is more brain, more ability, more vitality, more valour, and greater possibility in the Welsh than our English

friends have ever dreamed. The future is full of promise.

The question has been asked, "How does Wales stand in this era in comparison with England?" Have we any preachers compared with Frederick Robertson of Brighton, R. W. Dale of Birmingham, Dr Parker, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon? Have we any poets to be compared with Wordsworth, Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning, William Morris, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Matthew Arnold, or Theodore Watts-Dunton? Have we any poetess that can stand comparison with Christina Georgina Rosetti, who wrote such graceful and sensitive verse? Have we any humorous writer of verses that can compare with Thomas Hood, or Barham, the author of "The Ingoldsby Legends"?

Have we any historian in that era equal to Dr Arnold, author of "A History of Rome"; or any one that can, in insight, in knowledge, and in power of expression, equal Leslie Stephen? Then there is Froude, Freeman, William Stubbs (Bishop of Oxford), Lecky, and Buckle, masters in the art of history.

Have we any literary essayists like Carlyle? Where and who are the men who can be said to have created and moulded ethical religion and poetical belief in the Principality? Have we any great teacher and prophet like Ruskin? Any economist and philosopher of the type of Herbert Spencer or of John Stuart Mill? Or political economists that come up to the standard of Stanley Jevons and Walter Bagehot?

Have we any great scientific men like Darwin, Tyndall, Huxley, Sir Charles Lyell, or Archibald Geikie?

How does Wales stand in the field of biography? In nothing perhaps was the Victorian Era in England more fertile than in this. There is Stanley, author of "The Life of Dr Arnold"; Sir George Trevelyan, author of "The Life of Macaulay"; Stopford Brooke, biographer

of Frederick W. Robertson; Theodore Martin, author of the "Life of the Prince Consort"; and Foster, biographer of Dickens.

Have we any novelists to compare with Lord Lytton, Charles Dickens, Thackeray, Charles Reade, Charles Kingsley, George Meredith, and George Macdonald? And what about women-writers? There is Charlotte Brontë, author of "Shirley" and "Villette"; and there is "George Eliot," who wrote "Adam Bede," her masterpiece, and possibly the most entrancing thing since the days of Shakespeare. There is Mrs Oliphant, who wrote "Salem Chapel"; and Mrs Humphrey Ward, grand-daughter of Dr Arnold, who wrote that great religious romance entitled "Robert Elsmere."

And what about novelists for children? Admirable stories of the sea and of the school were written by Lewis Carroll, Mrs Ewing, and Miss Tucker. Did Wales in the Victorian Era produce anything equal to "Alice in Wonderland"?

Indeed, during this era England can boast of 47 historians, 58 poets, 70 novelists, 127 critics—all of recognised merit and international fame, who made very substantial contributions to the literature of England.

To answer these questions is by no means an easy task; and in answering them cognisance must be taken of the fact that in Wales there was not the same opportunity as in England for the cultivation of native talent. We had no Welsh Schools of Art, no Elementary, Secondary, or Intermediate Schools, or University Colleges, until the very close of the era. We must also take into account the conservative and exclusive character of the Welsh mind, and the indisposition of the people to read and to benefit by the productions of foreign nations. The Welsh are insular in their habits and cast of mind. They lack the broad philanthropic instincts.

It must also be borne in mind that Wales has given

but little encouragement to men of literary ability. Not a single man, however talented, has been able to make a living by his pen. Kilsby Jones realised more than any other known Welshman; but only a small part of it was made in Wales. No man could write better classical English than the hero of "Garth Madryn." Wales admires a man of genius, but she gives him no money; plenty of applause, but no bread and cheese. His productions are read with avidity, but he must look elsewhere for means wherewith to secure the necessaries of life. In order to give our English friends some idea of the cruel manner in which Wales treats her literary sons, we call their attention to the wonderful announcement made by Sir T. Marchant Williams at the Mountain Ash National Eisteddfod this year. In the course of his adjudication on a popular handbook of "Glamorgan Worthies from 1750 to 1850," he declared that not one of the three competitors was worthy of the prize. And what a wonderful prize it was! It amounted to the magnificent sum of fifteen guineas. None but a Welsh committee would ever dream of offering such a paltry sum for a handbook involving so much work, and covering a period of one hundred years. And yet the Welsh people complain that so many of her talented sons seek a living in foreign fields. At one period of his life, seven shillings a week was the salary of Dr William Rees ("Hiraethog"), and he had a wife and four children to maintain. It would be highly interesting if we could procure the correspondence which passed daily between Dr Rees and the God of Elias. We have reason to be grateful that he had a wife who knew how to convert every two shillings into a half-crown. The Welsh certainly need instruction in the art of generosity, and they can learn it from the Saxon if they only take it to heart. Many a Welsh publisher has enriched himself at the expense of our most talented literary men. Sir Walter Scott received

£700 for "Waverley," and during the nine years which followed its publication Constable paid him £110,000 for eleven novels of three volumes each, and three series of "Tales of my Landlord," making nine volumes more. During the remaining eight years of his life Sir Walter wrote eight more novels of three volumes each, as well as the "Life of Napoleon," and for one of these novels he received £10,000. Between November 1825 and June 1827 Sir Walter's literary earnings amounted to the almost incredible sum of £26,000. Sir Walter's aggregate gains far exceed those of any author who has yet lived. True, he ought to have made much more. He was worth £10,000 a year. Lord Lytton is believed to have cleared £80,000 by his novels. Dickens made money by his readings and his novels. Thackeray complained that he had never made as much as £5,000 by any book he had ever written. George Eliot made very large sums. Her total profits on "Romola" exceeded £10,000, and nearly double that amount is believed to have accrued to her by another of her works. Wilkie Collins received £5,000 for "Armadale," the agreement being signed before a line of the book was written, and he gained the same amount by "No Name." Lord Beaconsfield cleared at least £30,000 by his writings. Of poets, Lord Tennyson has been far and away the most successful in money-getting. Byron's total gains amounted to £23,000, and the highest price ever paid to Thomas Moore was £3,000 for "Lalla Rookh." Of historians, Lord Macaulay is at the top of the tree. Messrs Longman published the "History" on the understanding that the author should receive three-fourths of the net profits, and within a few months they paid him £20,000 on account.

It may be stated at once that Wales cannot stand comparison with England in the number of its creative geniuses during the era in question. But Wales is not

wanting in master-minds. But how are we to judge and to compare them in a manner that the English-reading public can appreciate?

Shall we judge them by their popularity? Popularity is never a safe test of real merit, especially in the case of a nation that has written in a tongue that the Saxon has persisted, throughout the ages, to ignore and stamp out.

The Welsh people have always regarded themselves as underrated. But Welsh readers of literary thought and expression are generally too proud and too much enamoured of their native tongue to care for international fame. The complaint, however, is based upon truth, but the explanation is not far to seek. The great bulk of Welsh literature during the era in question is in the vernacular. Saxons and foreigners, therefore, cannot be blamed for not understanding the Welsh, who thus have been an underrated race from time immemorial. They have always used for literary purposes a language not commonly understood. They have done so owing to the idea that a distinctive language is essential to nationality. How is it possible, therefore, for the English to reciprocate the intense enthusiasm which the Welsh never fail to manifest when speaking of their great preachers, poets, and musicians? Scott was prudent enough to idealise Scottish national life in the English language. If he had used Gaelic, he would have, as far as the Saxon and the alien were concerned, extinguished himself and his ideas. The same thing would be true of Loti if he had used the Brythonic language. But the writers of Britanny and of Scotland have sent out to the world their productions in the language of the largest of all reading constituencies. Disdaining to do this, Wales and the Welsh, with their native idiosyncrasies, are not familiar to the English-reading public. This is the suicidal policy, as regards international fame, which the Welsh people themselves have adopted throughout the

ages. Still, to be understood of aliens, adds not a cubit to the stature of intrinsic art. Whoever wants to know the real inner life of the Welsh must seek it under cover of that venerable old language, which many think—but think wrongly—is made up of nothing but consonants.

First of all, let us take the pulpit world for our comparison. Here, at any rate, Wales takes high ground, and she need not stand back abashed, for she has a glorious record. At present, it must be confessed, Wales has but few great pulpit personalities, and only two or three orators of the first rank; but in the era under consideration it is one of the most glorious and fruitful in the nation. The truth of God's word was a living consciousness in their own souls, and it took the form of their disposition. In some it took the philosophic form, in some the oratorical form, in others the dramatic and æsthetic form. While their deductions from the truth were quaint, original, practical, and fascinating, their strength was in their own wonderful personalities. Their preaching was really the echo of the Holy Ghost within them. It was the highest form and type of preaching. We have Dr William Rees ("Hiraethog"). He was a veritable giant, supreme among his contemporaries, not only on account of his wonderful gifts as a preacher, but also on account of his many-sidedness. He was a poet of the first rank, an essayist, politician, novelist, and theologian. We do not know of a preacher in England in the Victorian Era to be compared with him in versatility of character. He is one of the greatest ornaments of the period, and fills a vital place, not only in the pulpit, but in the poetic and literary life of that era. It matters not from what view-point we study him his genius comes fully in sight. It is the favourable theory of Galton, M. Taine, and others, that genius may be always explained by its environment. But the potential causes of this great man's qualities are not to

be found in his environment. For his rank was humble, his estate poor, his parents unlettered. The age in which he lived was not an age of patronage. His country did not possess great institutions of learning, and he was too poor to avail himself of the culture of the great schools of England, and the whole bearing of his nation at that moment was, to the critical eye of a foreigner, mean and insignificant.

It has been said that we have only two or three geniuses out of a million people. But if pathos be an aspect of genius, Dr Rees was indeed a genius. Is the perceptive faculty an aspect of genius? Is insight into human nature another aspect? Is passion?—and by passion we mean the fire that kindles the imagination, that stirs the soul, and moves men and women to self-sacrifice, to renunciation of ignoble habits, and the cultivation of the highest type of patriotism. Are humour, eloquence, sublimity of thought, dramatic intensity, knowledge of nature in all her moods and senses, and ability to interpret them, aspects of genius? Then Dr W. Rees was a genius, and perhaps the most impressive feature of his genius was the creative grandeur of his imagination. Hence, as a poet, I would place him with Milton, Dryden, and William Morris. As a preacher, in his overwhelming eloquence, and in the unexpectedness of his utterances, I would place him with Parker or Frederick Robertson. As litterateur, for strength and solidity, he ranks with Leslie Stephen. As a biographer, he stands side by side with Trevelyan. His biography of Williams of the Wern is a masterpiece. It was published in 1842, and translated into English in 1846. As a novelist I would place him in the same category with Thackeray or Charles Reade in simplicity of diction, and in the almost photographic realisation of characters and events; and as a humorist with Christopher North. In intellectual wealth and splendour of resources he stands

alone. Masters he has none, either in the sense of superiority or of imitation. He was unequalled in the range and quality of his achievements.[1]

Then there was his brother, Dr Henry Rees, in the Calvinistic Methodist body. When Mrs Beecher Stowe visited England in 1853 she went to hear one of our great English preachers. On being asked her opinion, she replied: "He is all very well, but oh! for half-an-hour of my brother Henry." To hear Dr Henry Rees preach created in one a feeling almost amounting to discontent at God's distribution of gifts to His servants. One of the most striking things in relation to him was the marvellous combination of the logic and even the metaphysic of thought, not only with the power of speech, but also with the argument, with humour, with sympathy, and with the catholicity of moral and spiritual apprehension. It is not at all to be wondered at that some good judges considered him the greatest preacher of the era. To classify and enumerate his wonderful gifts would occupy more space than we have at our command. But to have heard him was one of the greatest privileges within the reach of mortal man. Of the mother that gave birth to such wonderful sons, one is tempted to quote in the words of the angel of old, "Hail! thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women!"

There is Dr John Thomas of Liverpool—a man of extraordinary talent and influence—who possessed the qualities of a martyr. He did as much, if not more, than any of his contemporaries towards enlarging and intensifying the quality of patriotic love among the people. He was a great temperate advocate, and a trustworthy chronicler of Welsh Congregationalism. As a prose writer

[1] We are glad indeed to be able to present our readers with the analysis of his character by our talented author and preacher, the Rev. D. Adams, B.A.

he stands high. His weekly letters to *Y Tyst* were as racy and original as anything that ever appeared in the English press of that period. "I can write," said Erasmus, "but Luther can burn." Dr John Thomas could both write and burn. His eloquence at times was like a consuming fire. Dr Parker is reported to have said of Dr Thomas, after hearing him deliver his address from the chair of the Congregational Union, that his address was a rebuke to all present. From no pulpit in England were delivered more scriptural, philosophical, original, and eloquent sermons than those of Dr John Thomas. He will for ever stand out as one of the greatest figures in the evolution of Welsh thought and life of the times.

His famous brother, Dr Owen Thomas, of Liverpool, was a man of brilliant and fervid imagination, a prince among preachers; docile and unassuming as a child in social life, but a mighty warrior in the pulpit. Intellectual, graceful, heart-searching, eloquent, and always breaking the unadulterated bread of life—a veritable prophet of God. Where in England were witnessed such indescribable scenes as accompanied the preaching of Dr Owen Thomas? Rich sunsets from the very throne of God dyed his noble spirit in their mystic fire. In analysing his descriptive power, it may be said of him as of Turner, that he seemed to have dipped his brush in the colours of another world; and when he preached, he seemed to look down on the material world from a lofty, holy eminence. But besides being a preacher of the first rank, he had a great literary gift. His biography of the Rev. John Jones ("Talysarn"), in breadth of embrace, comprehensiveness, and deep insight into the man, his times, and his work, will stand comparison with that of Morley's "Life of Gladstone."[1]

[1] It is a source of satisfaction to feel and to know that his successor, the Rev. John Williams, is maintaining the reputation of that historic pulpit, in which this great man of God preached for so many years.

Another great figure of that era—and in some respects the greatest—was the Rev. Lewis Edwards, D.D., of Bala, who was the first Welshman who entered the University of Edinburgh, and the man who led the way towards the foundation of our present university life in Wales. In those days it was spade-work. Money was hard to get. Sympathy had to be created. The needs of education had to be brought home to the people. His solid quarterly, *Y Traethodydd*, started in 1845, and still running as a bi-monthly; his "Traethodau Llenyddol," and his work on the "Atonement," published in 1860, stirred the minds of thinking men beyond anything else in the Welsh language. They were valuable contributions to literature, history, philosophy, and theology. His essay on the nature of the Church, published in 1840, was hotly contested by several, one of them being "S. R.," one of the most versatile writers and distinguished men of his generation. Dr Lewis Edwards stands at the head of the list of Welsh preachers, patriots, and educationalists. He possessed those characteristics that belong to the epoch-makers of history.

And what shall we say of that magnetic man and preacher, Dr Herber Evans, who possessed the sweetness and tenderness of womanhood, and the strength and vigour of manhood? Never will it be possible to forget the burning utterances that were struck off from his soul —utterances marked by great spiritual insight, a keen imagination, abounding in illustrations from every region of nature and personal experience. Not that he always was himself or at his best, but who is and should? He was a highly sensitive man, and was probably the most childlike giant of his generation. His difficulty was not in securing a constituency of hearers, for he was literally bombarded with applications for his services, not only from Wales, but also from England. Every building in which he stood to preach, however spacious, was literally

crowded with representatives of every class of society, and it is not too much to say that the people thought less of the hymns they sang than the voice they were waiting to hear—the voice that was music in the ears of the multitude, and which made them feel at times uncertain as to whether they were in the body or out of the body. When he stood up to speak, the congregation was swayed by one sympathetic impulse, and they drank in every word that he said. He was not a leader in the sense that Dr Lewis Edwards was a leader, and men of his class never are; yet, in spite of schisms, divisions, hatred, and envy, in his presence men felt what a brotherhood they were after all. When he preached, there were no back doors of doubt or of fear; not one cadence in the ring of that glorious voice that was false. What a pity it is that we could not forever keep this mighty man of God with us! Long shall we remember and long shall our hearts dwell upon the sanctifying, uplifting, comforting, and soul-healing occasions when we had the privilege of hearing this wonderful spirit calling us back to God, to His Son Christ Jesus, and to the simple, robust faith of our fathers, and that in an age distracted by doubt and speculative thought. The nation misses him; but if there is a spirit-world, as we believe there is, this sweet and mighty servant of God is singing the song of the Lamb, whose name and Gospel he preached so faithfully and so well in the land of his birth.

Another great personality in that era was Dr Thomas Charles Edwards, whose great ideal in life was to carry on the work his father had begun as preacher, scholar, patriot, and man of letters. He was the first Principal of the first University College established in Wales. His commentary on 1 Corinthians, both in exegesis and scholarship, ranks among the best commentaries of the hour in any language. In theological grasp, philosophical insight and erudition, it is equal to the productions of Canon Westcott and Bishop

Lightfoot. Unmistakably he had the qualities of a true expositor. He had ability to take a broad and comprehensive view of the language, scope, and method of divine revelation. His mind was clear and penetrating. There was in him a strong analytical element. He had the gift to follow the course of scriptural reasoning, and had an extensive acquaintance with old translations, Jewish writings and traditions, as well as those of the Greek fathers. Above all, he was a man of a pure mind and a tender heart.

There have been sad gaps in the literary life of the Welsh, the longest and saddest being that during the sixteenth century, when the better classes of Welshmen wrongly believed that the social and intellectual salvation of Wales consisted of mere Anglicisation. There are but few nations who have during their whole existence thought and written. Take the Germans as an instance; they have scarcely any literature for the two centuries, 1550-1750. The only exceptions to this rule are ancient Greece, modern France, and modern England. And it can be said of the Welsh, as of the English, that a great deal of what has been written is worthless—worthless because written on purely denominational subjects by men of no education or literary ability.

Moreover, much of what was called Welsh literature at the beginning of the era was of a personal and contentious character, often offensive and unseemly; but toward the end there came a change both in tone and policy.

In the field of history mention should be made of the "History of Calvinistic Methodism in Wales," by the late Rev. John Hughes of Liverpool. It was published in three volumes in 1851-54-56, and is generally regarded as a valuable work, although disappointing as a work of reference.

Dr Thomas Rees of Swansea published in 1854-60 a translation of the exposition of the Rev. Albert Barnes

on the New Testament, which had great popularity in Welsh Sabbath Schools. In 1856-79 there appeared, in ten volumes, the "Gwyddoniadur"—the "Encyclopædia Cambrensis"—from the office of Mr Gee of Denbigh. This, perhaps, ranks among the most important work of the era; and was reissued, with additions, in 1889-96 In 1871-72-73-75-79 appeared the "History of the Independent Church of Wales," under the combined editorship of the Rev. Thomas Rees, D.D., of Swansea, and the Rev. John Thomas, D.D., of Liverpool. This possesses a great historical value, and will be a book of reference as to the Independent, or rather Congregational body, for many years to come.

We have in the Welsh language many books professing to give the story of many remarkable lives, and some of these books have had ready sale, not on the score of merit, but chiefly on account of the love the Welsh bear their poets and preachers. It may also be stated that this branch of literature has been in great favour in Wales. So also have theological works of all kinds. Reading is a characteristic of the Welsh, but until the advent of our theological colleges and university colleges, our people were entirely under the dominion of theological and poetical ideas. The masses read scarcely anything outside these two departments. But a reaction has set in. There is less demand for biographical and theological works, and a greater demand for general literature on science, politics, prose fiction, poetry, and even the drama. Among the rising generation of Welshmen the novel is taking the place of the Bible, and the drama slowly follows in the wake of the novel. This is natural, for their purpose is one: to hold the mirror up to nature; to show virtue and vice their own features. In one sense it is a good omen, for it shows that the Welsh mind is undergoing a process of enlargement; but this must be a matter of concern to all who are interested in

the future of the Principality, for the majority of the cheap English novels which our young people read are sadly lacking in brain stuff, and they make life one wild rush of passion.

During this era Wales had many fine humorous writers of verse of note and character, such as Talhaiarn, Ceiriog, Mynyddog, Watcyn Wyn (the last-mentioned still with us), and others. Of novelists who write in Welsh for children there have been none. This is a branch of Welsh literature which has hardly had any existence. Still, the children have always been the special care of Welsh writers and editors; simple text-books, catechisms, reciters, and storyettes are almost innumerable; while, in the matter of magazines, children are always handsomely catered for since very early in the century, seven or eight magazines exclusive for children still running.

The drama is a thing repugnant to the religious instincts of the Welshman, except in the form of dialogues (no matter how dramatic their presentation) performed in chapel and schoolroom by church members and choristers. For the dramatist as an artist the people have had no use whatsoever, although there are signs that the drama is being resuscitated through the instrumentality of the Eisteddfod; and during the latter part of the era we have produced men, such as Ifano Jones and Elphin, who evidently have a gift in this branch of literature. There are no women-writers like Mrs Oliphant, or Charlotte Brontë, or George Eliot (who was of Welsh extraction), although one cannot less than think of the brilliant and humorous sketches of Welsh social life and characters penned by Miss Winnie Parry, and published in "Cymru" towards the close of the era. It is here, of course, that Daniel Owen of Mold must be mentioned as Wales's most successful novelist, whose productions are known to all, and beloved of men of all shades of opinion and thought,

as remarkable in pathos, humour, and truthfulness. As yet there is not a single first-class historian, unless the late Rev. T. Price ("Carnhuanawc") be one; but the signs of the times are full of promise for many in the near future. There are a few literary essayists in this period that are worthy of consideration. Foremost among them may be mentioned the Rev. W. Rees, D.D. ("Hiraethog"), the Rev. Lewis Edwards, D.D., and Kilsby Jones. Carlyle himself never wrote anything of greater power and originality than Kilsby did. I have in my article on him given an example of his wonderful descriptive gift. Others may be mentioned —such, for instance, as the Rev. William Roberts, LL.D., ("Nefydd,") of Blaina, Nantyglo; the Rev. Evan Jones ("Ieuan Gwynedd"); the Rev. W. Jones ("Goleufryn"); and the Rev. John Jones ("Mathetes"). The Principality cannot point to any great philosopher, with the exception of Professor Henry Jones of Glasgow; but it is to be borne in mind that right up to the end of the era the whole of the undoubtedly philosophic stream of Welsh intellect found its way into profound sermons, such as those of John Jones of Talysarn, Dr Lewis Edwards of Bala, Dr Thomas Charles Edwards of Bala, the Rev. William Jones of Fishguard, and Principal David Charles Davies of Trevecca; the sermons of these men are full of sound, fresh philosophy. There is a tradition that Dr Thomas Charles Edwards once remarked that it was a pity that David Charles Davies had not written in English. He was certainly a great man, and a marvellous preacher. As regards science, several Welshmen have distinguished themselves—such, for instance, as the late Dr Isaac Roberts in astronomy, Dr John Rhys in philology, and the late Principal Viriamu Jones in physics; but Wales has no man that can rank with Tyndall or Huxley—in fact, science seems not as yet to be in the blood of the Welsh branch of the Celtic race. Poetry is; but then poetry is more allied to religion than to science.

Welsh poetry in the Victorian Era is characterised by the purity, the richness, the sublimity, and the profusion of its production. There is no period in the history of the nation so distinguished for the number of its great poets. The golden age of Welsh poetry is, however, back in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, radiant with the imagination and fancy and consummate artistry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, Dafydd Nanmor, Tudur Aled, and their fellows. But the Victorian Era was a period of renaissance in Welsh poetry, which gave to the nation her great poetic works in the *telyneg* (lyric), *bugeilgerdd* (pastoral), and *arwrgerdd* (epic), and when the *pryddest* (long poem) and the *awdl* (ode) reached their zenith. In this period perfection of form was reached. The Methodist Revival affected the literature of the nation more than anything, and especially the poetic side of it; and this accounts for the fact that so much of the poetry of that period is of a religious and descriptive character, and that so many of our poets were preachers. To be sure, Wales had then, as well as now, a large number of writers of verse with very little of it of an enduring character, and scarcely rising to the scale of real poetry. It contained but little real sentiment and imagination. It was pretty and fanciful, but unworthy of the name of high poetry. Many of the best poets of the era, such as Hiraethog, Talhaiarn, Ceiriog, and Islwyn, stand comparison with their great English contemporaries. A literal translation, and especially a translation of the sentiment and the soul, of Welsh poetry into English is an impossibility; and an Englishman, therefore, cannot hope to gain a true conception of its real worth. See pp. 12-13, "Cambro-American Pulpit," by the editor:—

"What, therefore, are the chief characteristics of Welsh poetry? Its wonderful alliteration [rhythmical assonance, strictly speaking], woven around beautiful similes and metaphors; its striking interrogations and

fine apostrophes; its vivid personifications, blended with grand exclamations and brilliant climaxes. It has not that elegant propriety of sentiment which distinguishes the productions of Virgil, nor has it anything approaching that uniform sublimity which, from first to last, lends charm and power to the strain of Homer. But it is classical in both form and language. It is more the poetry of thought than of expression. The thoughts glow like rubies, and the sentiment is full of dignity. It has tender feeling and fine moral sense. But the flashes are irregular; there is not the same uninterrupted strain of pathos and sublimity which characterises our English poets. The poets of every nation afford an index to the temper and character of the people. Welsh poets deal with the melancholy. Such is the temper of the race. It has more virtue to recommend it. In Welsh poetry there is a total absence of sensuality; there is nothing to offend the taste of the most fastidious of critics."

As compared with the poetry of the Victorian Era, it may be said that the poetry of the present is not so classical, though perhaps it is more philosophical—too much so; and there is a disposition among the Welsh bards of to-day to return to the form and the subjects of the ancients. It may be also stated that the influence of English and Continental poetry is more generally felt in Welsh poetry to-day than ever; and though it is maintained by some authorities that we have in Wales to-day better and greater poets than we have in England, there is no mistaking the fact that the Welsh poetry of this time is of a more superficial character than that of any other period, and especially the one under consideration. We do not say that the poetic genius is not as strong in the Welsh poet as in those English and Continental poets. But our Welsh poets have been subject to a system—the competitive system—that has cramped their efforts, and disabled them to place in the market productions worthy to be ranked with those of English and

foreign poets. The Eisteddfod is more of a check upon than a help to Welsh poetic genius. The Eisteddfod was not ordained to make poets; yet many and brilliant are her sons. There is in what we call Welsh poetry plenty of imagination and passion and national enthusiasm, but it has not directly played the same heavy part in the cultivation of Welsh moral life and mental equipment as the productions of Wordsworth, Browning, and Tennyson in England. Very seldom has the Welsh poet been also a prophet: his country's morals and religion and intellectual insight are so great and real as not to need the development of his prophetic temperament; the Welsh poet, as a prophet, is found in great numbers and in high quality in the pulpit, with prose sermons as vehicles. But right at the close of the era—in 1900—we find in the poem of the late young poet, Ben Bowen of Treorky, on "Williams of Pantycelyn"—adjudged second best at the Liverpool National Eisteddfod—a veritable prophet of the Browning type. This poem, as well as his still greater poem on "The Light of the World," marks Ben Bowen as *the* prophet among the bards of the Victorian Era.

As to the place of the poet to-day in the development of Welsh life and thought, it has to be stated that he is not such a potent factor in the life of the nation as he was in the Victorian Era. The bard in Wales to-day is respected more in a traditional than in a utilitarian sense. He has not the same force, either politically or socially or nationally, as he used to be in the days of Dr William Rees ("Hiraethog"), Caledfryn, Islwyn, Eben Fardd, Emrys, Nicander, Cynddelw, Talhaiarn, Ceiriog, Glasynys, Ioan Emlyn, Dewi Wyn o Essyllt, and Mynyddog.

We have distinguished poets at the present time, such as Hwfa Môn, Rev. E. Rees ("Dyfed"), Watcyn Wyn, and Rev. Elvet Lewis. In daring and imagination,

Hwfa Môn ranks high. Elvet Lewis is more beautiful, and evinces greater acquaintance with Continental poetic thought; but for a mastery of *cynghannedd* (rhythmical assonance), Dyfed is supreme. He is certainly the poet of the Eisteddfod. If Watcyn Wyn had written in English, he would have made his fortune. In the capacity to see, to understand, and to appreciate, or in what is technically called intelligence, the Welsh can stand comparison with any class of people. What they have for generations lacked is knowledge, and that is the fault of the English Government. However keen and strong a nation's intelligence may be, if it has not the fruit of intelligence, which is knowledge, it cannot expect to attain to any great heights. The realisation of this important fact has been brought home to them; hence the wonderful effort which is now being made to place within the reach of the nation, and of every citizen in the nation, those opportunities which alone can give Wales her rightful place in the world. There was a greater unfolding of intelligence among the common people in Wales during this era than any other that might be named, and the unfolding is still in progress. The people are seeking elevation; they are asking a wider life; they are demanding larger opportunities for self-culture. This is the one great hopeful sign for which we are grateful, and there are no signs of slipping back, but a continuous, cohesive, conscious, systematic growth in the spirit of constitutional freedom and knowledge, consistent with true loyalty to the predominant partner, without which Wales would not be what she is.

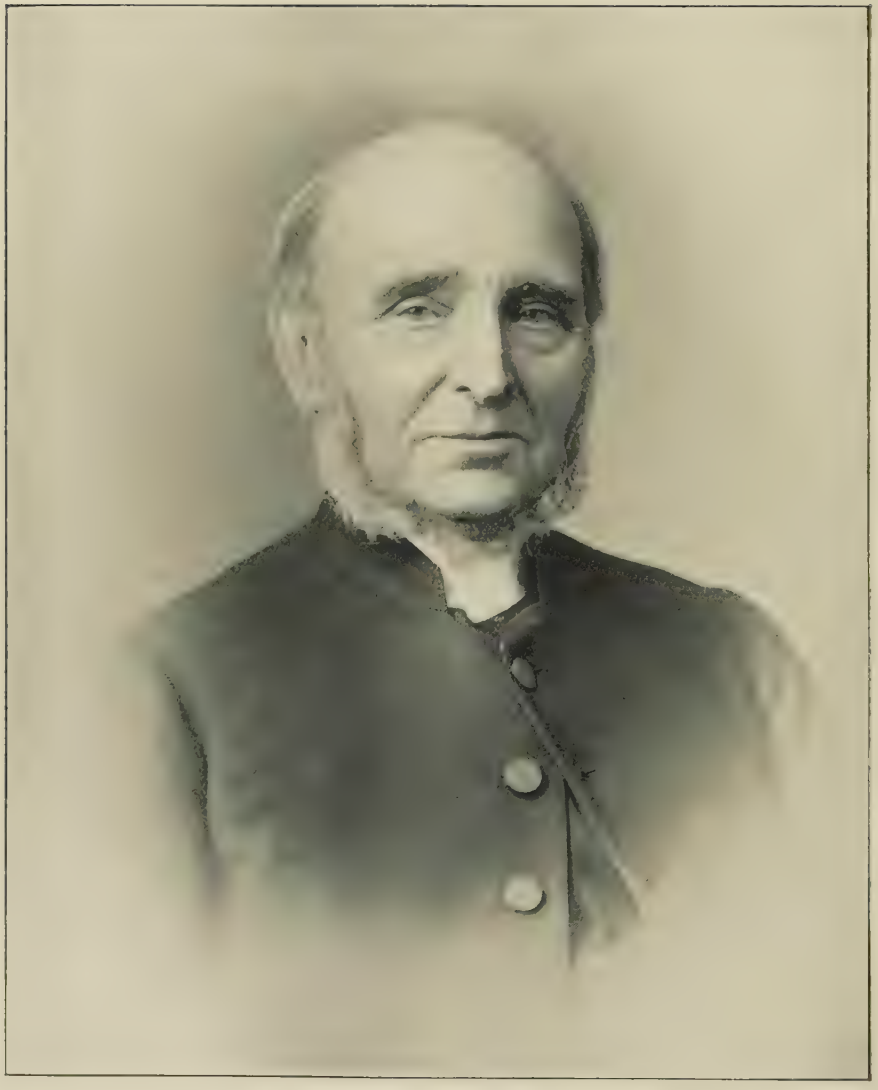
In conclusion, it might be well to ask, How does Wales stand in relation to the past? Are we its master or its slaves? In one sense the Wales of to-day is its master, for the people have grown in wisdom and knowledge. They have a larger degree of freedom and opportunity for public service. They are higher

on the road of learning. In another sense the Wales of to-day is the slave of the past—its slave in that it cannot shake it off if it would. The past in a large measure governs the present, though we may not be conscious of it, and not always ready to admit it. To the men whose lives and personalities form the subject-matter of this work is due the fact that Welsh history is taking the course it does. In what is passing around us, as well as in what is going on in Parliamentary life, we see the fruition of their ideals, and among those ideals were, first and foremost, the Christianisation of their countrymen. Secondly, the cultivation of the national character—the creation of a system of education which would place the Welshman in a position to compete with men of other nationalities. There is also the development of the peculiar characteristics of Welshmen, and an international recognition of our identity as a people. In addition to this, our fathers sought to preserve the language and the imaginative genius of the nation, and, above all, its spirituality. For the construction of this great ideal what power did they bring!—what quality of intellectuality, what tremendous force, what martyr-spirit! It infinitely surpassed anything the present has yet produced. We plead for the transcendency of the Victorian Era, and we resent the sovereign claims that are now being put forward to the supreme credit for the making of modern Wales. The making of modern Wales really began in the Tudor period. Then we witness the birth and the growth of the spirit of nationalism. It was then the love of the native tongue—the Welsh tongue—and the elevation of the people started. The Puritan movement extended and enlarged the work initiated in the Protestant period, and the great Methodist movement established it on permanent lines. Contemporaneous with the French Revolution a spirit

of political reform came into Wales, chiefly through the instrumentality of Morgan John Rhys, Roberts of Llwynrhudol, and John Jones, or, as he was commonly known among his countrymen, Jack Glanygors. Wales was not specially considered in the Reform movement of 1832, but the spirit of nationality continued to grow without any abatement or interruption up to the year 1868. Then the great battle of special political recognition was fought out in the Principality, and Welshmen began to work together for special legislation. Difficulties, of course, they experienced; but they had put their hand to the plough, and refused to look back. Thus they gave us our vantage ground. We have men to-day conspicuous for their ability and patriotism, who have grasped these ideals of our fathers, and are following them up with that fidelity and fortitude which has placed them very high in the esteem and affection of their countrymen. It is this vital connection between the past and the present that we wish to emphasise. There is not a single political or religious idea throbbing in the heart and brain of the nation to-day that cannot be traced to the era in question. The aspirations of the hour are by no means a fresh consignment born and bred out of the exigencies of the times, but they are the legacy left us by Dr Lewis Edwards and his son Dr Thomas Charles Edwards, Dr William Rees, Cynfaen, Cynddelw, Dr Thomas of Pontypool, and their compatriots. It may be stated that, in the period when these ideals were born and nursed, there was none of the braggart passion which has of late been introduced into Welsh public life. Let us not, therefore, in the heat of our national enthusiasm, forget our obligation, not to the metaphysical, but to the historical past. We should not underestimate the work and the achievements of the men who gave our politicians, our educationalists, and our preachers,

their marching orders. There is a continuity, not only of history, but of purpose. If our methods of warfare is difficult, our mission is the same; and these Victorian ideals are a part of the present so much so that no political sophistry and no iconoclasm can get rid of. And if this book will succeed in placing the present generation of Welshmen in a right mental attitude towards these elementary points in the making of Wales as it is, it will have justified its existence. It would be criminal to cut ourselves away from the vital regenerative forces which have made Wales, intellectually and politically, for the first time, a nation to be reckoned with. Indeed, the spirits of these martyred ones are now crying out for the fulfilment of their great desires. Martyrs they were in the one essential sense of martyrdom, for they had the qualities that made the men of the stake not only famous, but immortal. They suffered social ostracism, and spurned the patronage that was offered in high places. It was not fashionable then to cry out the cry of wrong and to emphasise the grievance of social injustice. For our fathers there was no political machinery to uphold and to inspire national enthusiasm—these had to be created. But they had a clear and intelligible idea as to what they wanted, and they had the courage to make known their just and daring thoughts, and the love to labour for their achievement.

J. Vyrnwy Morgan.



Bishop HUGHES of St. Asaph. [*To face p.* 53

The Right Rev. JOSHUA HUGHES, D.D.

Vicar of Llandovery, 1846-1870
Bishop of St Asaph, 1870-1889

By the Right Rev. J. PRITCHARD HUGHES, D.D., Lord Bishop of Llandaff

Bishop Hughes of St Asaph, the first Welsh-speaking bishop to occupy the see of St Asaph for one hundred and fifty years, was in many respects a leading man in Wales throughout the greater part of his career. During the earlier part of his public life he was best known in South Wales. During the last nineteen years he became equally well known and respected throughout North Wales as Bishop of St Asaph. As an earnest and hard-working parish clergyman, as an able and eloquent preacher, as an enthusiastic educationalist, as an ardent patriot, as a wise administrator, and above all as an honest man of deep religious convictions, who had the courage to express and act upon his carefully-formed opinions at whatever cost, he gained for himself an honoured name that will live long in the history of his country.

In view of the questions that most occupy the public mind at the present day, the intense and active interest that he took in the subject of education is perhaps the part of his life that would most attract attention. From elementary education to intermediate and higher education, this was the subject which, outside his immediate pastoral work, always most attracted him and occupied his thoughts and time.

An active member of the St David's Diocesan Education

Board, and an active promoter of elementary education in his own and neighbouring parishes, he partook of the broad-minded and far-seeing views of Bishop Thirlwall of St David's, and it might have been better for our country if those views had been more generally acted upon.

Amongst other instances of his activity in connection with secondary or intermediate education may be mentioned the immense pains that he took as one of the trustees of Llandovery School, or, as it used to be called, the Welsh Educational Institution, Llandovery, which he always strove to raise to the highest standard of efficiency—a standard that it has long since reached and well maintained.

But it was in connection with what is commonly known as Higher Education that he worked longest and hardest, believing firmly as he did that if a satisfactory system of higher education could be established in Wales, that would of necessity bring about a general improvement and development of both elementary and secondary education.

Accordingly he first set to work to try and bring about an enlargement of the scope of St David's College, Lampeter, and to obtain for that college further powers of conferring degrees. His efforts in this direction were to a great extent successful, though not quite to the extent that he hoped. In connection with this matter, he endeavoured to get an existing Act of Parliament carried out and extended. The Act referred to provided under certain circumstances, or would have provided, for the transfer of St David's College, Lampeter, to Brecknock, and its union with Christ's College, Brecknock. In the promotion of this and kindred aims connected with higher education in Wales he was the writer of various letters and pamphlets that appeared over the name of "Veritas."

His zeal for higher education in Wales never flagged, but lasted throughout his career both as a parish clergyman and as Bishop of St Asaph, and led him into lengthy correspondence and many conferences with nearly all the representatives of Wales in both Houses of Parliament, as well as with many other leaders of public opinion, and there can be no doubt that the influence of his exertions was largely instrumental in bringing about the great advances in intermediate and higher education in Wales that have taken place in the course of the last forty or fifty years, even though those advances have not always been on exactly the lines that he would have chosen.

In seeking the advancement of his own country, he took every opportunity he could find of studying and making himself acquainted with the educational system of Scotland, Ireland, and various continental countries where the circumstances seemed in some respects to correspond with those of Wales. And he soon became convinced that to bring about the desired result there must be a degree-conferring University for Wales which would act as a stimulus and an inspiration to the whole educational system of the Principality. His anticipations in that direction have already been largely verified by results.

One of the great difficulties that Bishop (then Mr) Hughes had to contend with in getting people to admit that exceptional treatment was needed for Wales arose from the, perhaps, natural feeling that the old universities and public schools of England provided the best education that could be given. This feeling, however natural it may have been in those that had enjoyed that education, took no account of the fact that it was practically quite out of reach of the masses of the people, and his object was to provide a ladder that every one might climb to the highest rung if only they had the ability and perseverance.

There was another difficulty to contend with, in that many people feared that the establishment of separate

educational organisations and institutions in Wales might tend to the perpetuation of the Welsh language, which they looked upon as an unmitigated evil, and as tending to retard the progress of the Welsh people.

This objection needed careful handling, for it contained that little element of truth that, when it is present, always make an untruth dangerous. Bishop Hughes was not the man to advocate anything that he thought would in any possible way retard the progress of his countrymen. He felt and always acted on the belief so well expressed by a recent writer (Mr Mitra), that it is a good thing to be *national* in one's aims and aspirations, but an infinitely better thing to be *rational*. But he loved the old language of his countrymen, and he saw that it might be, and ought to be made, an element in their true education, and an instrument that would prove a help and not a hindrance to their true progress. Nay, more, he saw that the attempts that had been made in various ways to stamp out the Welsh language had done nothing but harm. And accordingly he set himself to work to put the use of the language on a better footing. He pointed out the cruel wrong that had been done in countless instances by ignoring the fact that the Welsh language was the only language properly understood by a very large number of his countrymen both in Wales and in many large towns in England, and consequently leaving them without any religious teaching, and without the opportunity of worshipping the God of their fathers in the language of their homes and their hearts.

And thus Bishop Hughes came to be looked upon not only as an ardent educationalist, but also as a champion of the Welsh language. He never, however, advocated the cultivation of the Welsh language to the exclusion of English or any other language, but he recognised the fact of its existence as a fact that must be taken account of in matters both of religion and of education, a fact, the

ignoring of which in times past had done untold harm to both.

When he became Bishop of St Asaph, he was able in many ways to secure fair play for the Welsh-speaking element in many parishes, both directly in his own diocese, and also more indirectly in various English towns where large numbers of Welsh people were congregated.

In addition to his activity in the above direction he was recognised as one of the ablest and most eloquent of Welsh preachers of his day, his name being commonly coupled with those of Mr Parry of Llywel, Dr Griffiths of Llandilo, Canon Evans of Rhymney, Archdeacon Griffiths of Neath, and others, as the foremost preachers amongst the Welsh clergy.

He was always considered a leader among the evangelical school, and while firmly and loyally attached to the Established Church, to which his family had always belonged, he invariably cultivated friendly relations with the ministers and members of other religious denominations, by whom he was regarded with feelings of respect and affection. He in his turn fully appreciated the earnest and self-denying labours of the various Nonconformist bodies, and while he lamented the division that he saw around him, he often remarked that if the Old Church of the country had been true to herself and her ideals, those divisions need never, and probably would never, have arisen.

He was tolerant and broad-minded in his attitude towards all, even those from whose opinions he entirely differed, and whose conclusions he most deplored. At the same time he had his own strong convictions and a stern sense of duty from which nothing could turn him. This, however, in no way detracted from the genial kindness with which he won the affection of all with whom he was brought into close contact, and all who really knew him.

The Very Rev. HENRY THOMAS EDWARDS, Dean of Bangor (1837-1884).

By The Rev. Canon CAMBER WILLIAMS, St David's.

The Dean, as he was popularly known, was a child of the vicarage and a member of a levitical family. He was the third son of the Rev. William Edwards, Vicar of Llanymawddwy, in the Diocese of St Asaph, where he was born on 6th September 1837. Two of his father's brothers were in Holy Orders, one, the Rev. Ebenezer Edwards, "Edwards Mallwyd," being one of the princes of the Welsh pulpit in his day. And his three brothers, of whom the Right Rev. A. G. Edwards, D.D., the present Lord Bishop of St Asaph, is one, all devoted themselves to the work of the ministry. George Borrow, in his "Wild Wales," says that he found the Rev. William Edwards "to be a first-rate Greek and Latin scholar, and also (what is highly significant) a proficient in the literature of his own country." The mother was descended from a Gloucestershire family of the name of Wood—a family which numbers several names of literary celebrities among its members, among others, the late Lord Chancellor Hatherley. One illumining fact respecting her is that, immediately after settling down in a monoglot country parish, she set herself to learn the Welsh language so that she might take her part in the Sunday School and in visiting her husband's parishioners. In the year 1849, when Henry was twelve years of age, his father was promoted to the living of Llangollen. By that time, it is on record, the future Dean

Dean EDWARDS, of Bangor. [*To face p.* 58

had saved the life of a boy who had fallen into the river, had thrashed the village bully for persecuting a smaller boy, and had carved his initials at a considerably higher level than those of any other boy in the district on the face of a precipitous rock that overhangs the stream.

The story of his education is soon told. Till he was fourteen years of age he was educated at home, his father imparting to him the rudiments of classics and mathematics. Gaining an exhibition at Westminister School, he spent two years there; and was there, owing to *res augusta domi*, placed under private tuition till he matriculated at Jesus College, Oxford, in 1857.

His university career was disappointing. The repeated change of teachers during his school days, and the indifferent state of his health at the University, militated against his success in the schools. Contrary to his own and his friends' expectations, he only obtained a second class in classical moderations. His disappointment, together with his ill-health, induced him to read for the Pass Schools in his final examination. He took his share in the general life of the University. Two interesting items of information respecting this period of his life may be added. The Rev. Canon Hughes of Peterborough, a contemporary and friend at Jesus College, when asked what he remembered of the Dean's college days, replied: "He was always in very indifferent health, was very impulsive, and was very keen about the necessity of appointing Welsh leaders and bishops for the Welsh Church." When impressing upon the Bangor exhibitioners the imperative necessity of acquiring facility and power of expression in the vernacular, he on one occasion instanced his own case. "When I matriculated," he said, "my Welsh was much worse than yours. But I made up my mind that I should never be put in the shade by anybody by reason of not being able to express my thoughts in the language of the people. And I read aloud and committed to memory some Welsh

every day during my under-graduate course." Among the classical writers Horace was his favourite author. Quotations from the odes are often met with in his writings. During his last visit to Italy, in the company of his friend the Rev. John Morgan, then Vicar, now Archdeacon of Bangor, at every turn Horace's description of the scenes recurred to the Dean's mind. It afforded him the keenest delight to recite from memory, as they travelled, passages from the odes descriptive of the neighbourhood.

Before entering Oxford, he had for a time thought of the army as a profession. That idea was soon laid aside. The Church claimed him, and with whole-hearted devotion he resolved to give himself to the work of the ministry. He took his B.A. degree in 1861, became assistant master at Llandovery College, and was the same year ordained deacon by Bishop Thirlwall of St David's. In the following year he became his father's curate at Llangollen, and was ordained priest at the Advent Ordination of Bishop Short of St Asaph. In 1866 he was appointed to the Vicarage of Aberdare. In 1869 he became Vicar of Carnarvon, on the death of the Rev. James Crawley Vincent. In 1876 he succeeded Mr Vincent's father in the Deanery of Bangor. And in 1884 his brief but crowded working-day closed at the early age of forty-seven.

His sun set while he was still in the prime of his manhood. "And yet," said one who had energetically differed from him on most public and religious questions, "his funeral alone preached that he had not lived in vain. The man whose memory was so genuinely honoured must have accomplished a work that was regarded by his countrymen as of permanent value." The place which he had won in the estimation of the clergy was shown as early as 1874. In that year, after only five years' work in the diocese, he, a young man, as clergy reckon age, was elected without opposition to represent his clerical brethren in Convocation. The voice of the laity was well expressed

by a Welsh Church newspaper, edited by a layman:—"In his death the greatest star in the Church's world has been extinguished." Outside the other three cathedral cities, the Dean of Bangor was to Welsh Churchmen "The Dean." An Oxford under-graduate, the leader of Welsh Churchmen in the University, could not tell the names of the Deans of St Asaph and St David's. The connection of Dr Vaughan with the Deanery of Llandaff had become known through the controversy that took place over his appointment.

But high as Dean Edwards stood in the estimation and in the affections of Church people, Welsh Nonconformists were hardly behind his co-religionists in the admiration and affection with which they regarded him. There was no public man in Wales in his day, and there has been no one since, whose funeral drew such a concourse representative of the foremost and best in every party, creed, and class. "Never," said the Rev. Daniel Rowlands, a leading Calvinistic Methodist minister, and then Principal of the Bangor Normal College, "in Wales, if anywhere, did so many Nonconformists and Nonconformist ministers attend the funeral of a Churchman." The Wesleyans suspended the sitting of their district conference to attend the funeral. The General Assembly of the Calvinistic Methodists, sitting at the time in Liverpool, passed a resolution expressing their sense of his loss. The most extreme Radical and anti-Church of the vernacular papers declared: "Somehow against its will, the body of the Welsh people entertained a great affection for the Dean. He was the nation's child, and at this time was cherished to the utmost enthusiasm." Thus before his early death Dean Edwards had secured a foremost position among the religious leaders, not of his own communion only, but of the Welsh nation.

The accidents of country and age may vary, but the character and the principles which made the Dean "the

child of the Welsh nation" are for all ages, and even for all nations. The careers of the Welsh religious leaders in the last century were a main formative influence in the making of the Wales of to-day. Their history is a necessary preliminary in the study of Welsh life in the twentieth century. The character and principles which won for them their influence and leadership—in the case of Dean Edwards we may almost say that he wrung his position from the nation "somehow against its will"—these should be the study of all who would influence their age and contribute to the moulding of the future in this or any nation.

For the Dean was no prophet of smooth things. His life was mainly spent in the effort to convince the majority of his fellow-countrymen that the subject of their proudest boasting was a mark of weakness, and a national misfortune. "There was not a Churchman living," said his Nonconforming eulogist already quoted, "who had heaped such censures upon his Nonconformist countrymen." How, then, came he to possess, not the admiration, but also the affection of those upon whom he "sometimes poured torrents of scathing denunciation?"

This is the interesting problem suggested by the life of Dean Edwards. Those who enjoyed the privilege of his intimacy knew, and readers cannot fail to gather from his writings, that the power which took the people captive was a combination, rather, a blending, of religious faith and true patriotism in a strong personality. He lived a transparently sincere Christian life, resting upon a childlike, but intelligent, faith. He believed in, and loved with all the fervour of an intense nature, his Church and his nation. The passionate longing of his heart was the full union of these two objects of his love, for their highest mutual good. And he sought this end without flagging, through good report and evil report, with unflinching courage, exposing the weaknesses of each,

mercilessly scourging their faults when occasion demanded, first in the field when either was attacked, and breaking out into glowing pæans over the virtues of each indifferently.

It was at Portmadoc, when yet a young lad, that I first saw Dean Edwards. He was the preacher at the Choral Festival of the deaneries of Lleyn and Eifionnydd. As the processions of clergy moved up the chancel, though there were many strange faces among them, we were not for a moment in doubt as to which was the Dean, whom we were so eager to see. A tall fine form, with a clear-shaven pale face, chiselled features, walking with a curious jerk at every step, as if he were accustomed to take longer strides and to plant his foot firmly on the ground, riveted our attention. There was a natural majesty, totally void of pomp, in his appearance, which gave one the impression of enormous power and controlled vigour. Children though we were, we felt uplifted and inspired by the first glimpse of the man whom we had learnt to regard as our leader. He took his place, fortunately for us, on the opposite side of the choir, and as we gazed at his face (there was but little singing from three of us) he attracted and awed us at the same time. There was a sternness in his look.

That youthful impression was in the main only heightened on closer acquaintance. As he passed along the streets in Bangor, the powerful frame, the thoughtful face, and the vigorous walk and look, as of a man who had a great work to do, but who knew what it was, and his ability to cope with it, caused people who saw him for the first time to look back and gaze after him. "Vigorous" is the epithet that best expresses the salient feature in his life. The mention of his age, forty-seven, at the time of his death, took people by surprise. Most would have suggested twenty years more, so large a place had he filled in the public mind, so much work had he crowded into his few working hours. And that in spite of very indifferent

health, his powerful-looking frame notwithstanding. "I am far from well," is a continual refrain throughout his correspondence. His social charm attracted all who came into contact with him. His intimate friends loved even more than they admired him. The devotion and tender courtesy of this man who swayed crowds, and thought for the thousands, towards his motherless little daughters is the most vivid recollection of a first visit at his house. He keenly felt the imputations of false motives, so often levelled at him ; and on the other hand, he grieved over the hard, though fair, blows he himself had delivered. The very vigour of his character and nervous excitability naturally tended to a masterful and somewhat hasty temper, which was, however, under the strong control of a disciplined will. Many anecdotes are related how at public meetings, while other speakers became irritated by interruptions, he, like the "Great Marlborough," became calmer and more composed as the fight waxed faster and more furious. In the height of the typhoid fever, with pulse and temperature far above the normal line of delirium, and when his medical man thought it enhanced his risk, he maintained his clearness of mind by sheer force of will.

But the most striking revelation, to those admitted into the inner court of his acquaintaince, was the Dean's deep piety. Family and private prayer were to him a great reality. A friend travelling with him one morning by an early train found him so engrossed in a book that all his attempts to draw him into conversation failed. He was saying matins which his early start had prevented his doing before commencing the journey. His reluctance to let his friend know the reason of his reticence was very characteristic. It was rarely, and then almost in silence, that he ever drew aside the curtain of the court, and allowed any one to behold even the outside of his Holy of Holies, to which he so constantly resorted. Another

friend, entering his room just before the commencement of a great meeting at which he was to speak, found him on his knees. "Whatever success I have achieved, and any good I may have done in life," he once remarked to the writer, "has been the result of prayer. I have never done anything without prayer."

Such was Dean Edwards in his private life. And the power of such a life wrought upon all that came into contact with him. As Demosthenes was adjudged the greatest orator because his speeches stirred men to action, so, after due allowances for youthful hero-worship, the writer without hesitation, for the same reason, considers the Dean the greatest personality that it has been his privilege to know. Men, more learned, greater scholars, deeper theologians and profounder philosophers, one may have known, but in the magic power of inspiration he stood unrivalled. "I never spoke with the Dean," said one who knew him well, "without being more deeply impressed with the dignity of human life and human destiny, and always came away from him with new inspiration and renewed energy for my work." Of all his great gifts, this, the force of his personality, inspiring and rousing into activity all that was best in others, was the greatest.

The year 1870 marks a new era in the history of the Church in Wales. From 1820 to 1840 or 1850 had been a period of exhaustion. The younger portion of her people had left her when the Calvinistic Methodists severed their connection in 1811, and by 1830 the older generation that had remained was passing away. From 1850 to 1870 the Church had been slowly recovering. The great evangelical preachers on the one hand, and the Welsh representatives of the Oxford Movement on the other, were quickening her spiritual pulse and teaching her to believe in herself. Associations of earnest laymen in various parts added another element of strength.

There were controversies; but they centred round the doctrines and practices. And some of the ablest writers and theologians that Wales has seen engaged in them on the Church's side; but one school did not fully understand the Church which they defended, and the other did not understand Nonconformity. The election of 1868 had marked the rise of new political forces which the Church leaders did not measure or understand. And the Disestablishment of the Irish Church at the same time whetted the appetite of the anti-Church party, and forced upon the Church the unwelcome necessity of defending, not her doctrines and practices, but her position and material resources. At this juncture Dean Edwards stepped upon the stage as the new Vicar of Carnarvon.

On the 22nd December 1870, he published his letter to Mr Gladstone on "the Church of the Cymry," which embodied the lines of his policy already mentioned, and which, by the way, largely influenced that statesman's attitude towards Wales as well as the Welsh Church, as a collation of Mr Gladstone's utterances on Welsh questions with Dean Edwards's writings and speeches would show. The promotion to the Deanery of Bangor six years later set the new Dean free from parochial duties to pursue the triple aim of his life: the promotion of the spiritual efficiency of the Welsh Church, and of the welfare of the Welsh nation, and the reconciliation of the Church and that portion of the Welsh people who have become separated from their spiritual mother.

He could not be labelled with any party name; each of the three schools might claim him as its own. He partook of the fervour of the Evangelical, the High Churchman's reverence, and the Broad Churchman's wide outlook, which recognises actualities. What distinguished him was his overwhelming belief in the divine mission of the Church, and the conviction that she is God's ordained instrument to elevate and equip the Welsh nation for the divinely

appointed part it is to contribute to the corporate life of the kingdom, and so to humanity at large.

His ministerial life at Llangollen, Aberdare, and Carnarvon exhibited great power of organisation, and the readiness with which large sums of money were subscribed in each place towards Church restoration and extension was the response to the same overpowering earnestness that afterwards carried hostile crowds at public meetings. In sick-rooms he was diffident and hesitating till he knelt down to pray. "I have just heard the Dean praying with ——" (a Cathedral chorister dying of consumption), said a working man one evening. "Oh, I never heard such prayer and pleading." In the pulpit he was a combination of Elijah and Barnabas. His sermons were a marvel of fiery eloquence. He fiercely denounced vice, and furiously condemned errors in creed or practice among his hearers; but at the same time gave expression to adoration such as is rarely heard from any pulpit, and to the most melting tenderness. And he so identified himself with his subject that the end of a sermon left him in a state of prostration, sometimes alarming to witness. When as a young curate at Llangollen he had been preaching fiercely against drunkenness, an old man in the parish who was not a total abstainer said to him: "Why don't you preach like the old gentleman your father, Mr Henry: he gives us the pure Gospel, not anything personal like you do."

He prepared his sermons with care, for all important occasions writing them out and committing them to memory. And believing in the power of the pulpit, he could hardly refuse a request for his service, however remote or insignificant the parish might be. "This afternoon," he writes, "I am obliged to go to Llanddona. That persistent —— has bothered me into going." Llangadwaladr, Beddgelert, and the little mission church at Penlongarnedd—all echoed to his stirring tones.

The central point in his theology was love. "It would be difficult," said a friend one day, "to find a verse in which the Dean could not see love." God in His love created man to share and reflect His own image and life. In His love, when man fell, He provided, by the offering of His Son, a restoration. Because love is the law of the divine life, God is one. And before love can become the law of human life as the reflection of the divine, there must be unity among God's people. Unity, as the condition of love, thus became the central theme in his teaching. The following outline, written by himself, of the first sermon I heard him preach, will illustrate the Dean's teaching, and, what always impressed his hearers, the gift of spiritualising Old Testament incidents :—

2 KINGS iii. 14-17.

At sundry times in the history of this Church, God sent forth prophets by two and two, in order that in their appointed lives such might represent a different aspect of the ministry of the eternal prophet. Moses and Joshua, David and Solomon, Elijah and Elisha, were so linked together in their careers.

Elijah, working miracles without means by the word of power committed to him within the limits of the Promised Land, at the last ascending into heaven, and causing his mantle to descend upon a successor, was especially a type of Christ in the years of the incarnation, confining the ministry to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, working his mighty works without visible agencies, and ascending to the right Hand of God to send down the Holy Spirit upon the Church.

Elisha, inheriting the mantle of Elijah, and a double portion of his spirit, working miracles by the use of means, extending his ministry to the lands of Edom, Moab, and Syria, was a type of our Lord, as He works for aye through the agencies of His ministry in the Catholic and Apostolic

Church throughout all lands. Thus, in the workings of Elisha, we may see prefigured the processes through which the ever-present, eternal, invisible Prophet, is accomplishing the mighty works of His supernatural grace in the life of the Church. From this point of view, let us proceed to consider the significance of that work which is recorded in the pages from which the words of the text are taken. I will ask you to dwell upon

I.—The narrative tells us that at this time the kings of Israel, Edom, and Judah had gone forth to war against Moab. In the campaign, they had led their forces through the wilderness of Edom. The plan of the campaign was decided by the question, "Which way shall we go up? And they answered, Through the wilderness of Edom. So the King of Israel went, and the King of Judah, and the King of Edom, and they fetched a compass of seven days' journey." At the end of these circuitous marches, the forces reached a position in which they were exposed to a great peril. "They fetched a compass of seven days' journey, and there was no water for the host and for the cattle that followed them."

The forces were threatened with utter destruction. The fierce rays of the eastern sun were falling upon the weary soldiers from above, and the desolate, hard, and cruel wilderness opened no fountains to slake their thirst. The cry of despair rose from the lips of the King of Israel. He said: "Alas, that the Lord has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab."

In that hour of supreme need, a higher wisdom and a truer instinct was found in Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah. When earth failed to open her fountains, and the dreary wilderness frowned in cruel bareness on all sides, his soul rose above earth to the throne of Him who of old "opened the rock and the waters gushed out, they ran in dry places like rivers." He sought the saving influence of

supernatural grace flowing through the ministry ordained of God. "Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord that we may enquire of the Lord by him? Then one of the King of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah." In him Jehoshaphat recognised the indwelling ministry of God. He said, "The Word of the Lord is with him." Acting upon the counsel of Jehoshaphat, the three kings, on behalf of their perishing forces, went down to seek aid, through the power dwelling in Elisha.

Is not this a parable as well as a history? Has not God the Holy Spirit recorded this event in order to teach man in every age unchanging spiritual truths? Here we see accurately prefigured the experiences that meet human nature during her weary march through the wilderness of this world.

The forces that make up human society go forth upon their campaign to seek the riches and the honour of conquest. Human progress is a march—a weary, circuitous journey, the compass of a seven days' travel in pursuit of that force which it seeks to conquer. The dangers and difficulties are ever the same. The needs of human nature, however much some leaders of thought may ignore them, are forever the same, and will make themselves heard. For a time our nature can bear to march forward in the world's ways in the pursuit of sensual pleasure, of earthly gain, and in the performance of earthly work and in the fellowship of earthly companionship. But the hour comes when an imperious thirst makes itself felt. The heat of sensual passion or of absorbing worldliness has dried up the fountains of feeling, has caused all the fruits of the spirit to wither, has reduced life into a dry, hard, barren ground. On all sides, the need of fresh fountains is recognised. The human leaders see the danger. They are told that the host is perishing, that society is full of

danger. Discontent, misery, hardness of heart, hopelessness, restless, feverish impatience, are felt in the great masses of society. Taught to value the world as their only place of existence, taught to regard sensual pleasure as their only practical good, taught to march through the wilderness, they cannot succeed in the world, they cannot gratify sensual appetites, they can find no water in the wilderness; and the result is that human society is threatened with ruin because it is consumed by a thirst which it cannot satisfy. The cry for reform rises high. The human guides lead on their forces. The philosophers and seers, who cannot be persuaded for a long time to believe that the wilderness is dry, and has no fountain which they can find, take us round through a weary round of theory, of speculation, of discovery. We march with them through the seven days' compass, the philosophical and scientific issues of the day, and at the end of the weary round we are in despair. "There is nothing to satisfy the soul's thirst here. We have marched far, but after all we find not the influences that give freshness to the heart, that cause the fruits of a noble spiritual humanity to grow in our being, that cause the blossoms of an immortal hope to burst forth, that give persistent energy and strength to the will in its pursuit of duty, that enables us to go onward to win triumphs over the enemy of our being." "There is no water for the host."

In that hour the religious instinct makes itself heard, and leads human society to that power which can alone slake the thirst; after weary marching through all the roundings of earthly experience, it must come to seek salvation from the fiery heat, which parches the inner life, that creates the cravings of burning discontent, that works withering decay, that turns communities into smoking furnaces in which the heated passions of men rage and flame, and reduce society to ashy ruin. To Him the individual soul, after weary wanderings through the round of earthly

experiences, comes to be saved from the blasting influence of earthly carnal selfishness, the fiery heart of rebellious passion that torments with a worm that dies not while its flame is unquenched, through the renewing streams that flow from the Cross, the water of the river that in the channels of the Church proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

II.—Who were the suppliants that approached Elisha, and how did he acknowledge their claims?

The King of Judah was there. He represented the ancient order: he reigned in Jerusalem, that city which the Lord had chosen to place his name there, in which stood the temple containing that Ark of the testimony which had gone before the Church in the wilderness, with its thirst of the human soul. After looking abroad over the surface of worldly life, and finding no fountain of relief, the human spirit is forced, by the teaching of a fiery craving that it cannot appease, to have recourse once more to the power of religious truths. The forgotten prophet is remembered, the teachings of divinity, despised during the previous marches of the mind, once more assert their claims, and the leading thought is directed towards the development of a theological school which shall answer the questionings of the human heart and draw forth the streams of religious influence to cool its parched lips. "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him?" The result of that enquiry is a great religious movement, a stirring of man's heart towards the hidden forces of divinity, a turning of public attention, a rush of public feeling, an eagerness of investigation directed towards the oracles of prophecy, the sacraments of God, towards the portals of the Church, that house in which the eternal Elisha is seated and cries with authority, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." He alone can quench the

extreme thirst of nations and of men. To him the nation brought the tables of the law, the golden pot of supporting manna, and Aaron's rod, above which the blessed Shechinah shone in its holy mystery. With him was Jehoram, the king of the separated tribes, who, oppressed by the exacting spendthrift magnificence of Solomon, and the arrogant tyranny of Rehoboam, had been tempted to follow Jeroboam into secession from the Church's ancient order and unity. Jehoram was the heir of a false system, and he adhered to its falseness (verse 3): "He cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin." With them was also the King of Edom, representing the race of that pleasure-loving, sensual, profane man of the world, Esau, out of whose loins his race had descended.

How did Elisha receive these suppliants? He promised to bring forth saving waters for all of them. But he sternly taught Jehoram that he was not entitled to the grace by right of his own position, but by virtue of the influence derived from his association with Jehoshaphat. "What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father and to the prophets of thy mother. . . . As the Lord of Hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee." The descendant of Esau, and the heir of Jeroboam's fatal mistake, had cut themselves off from that fountain which had never ceased to follow the Church. But they were able to drink of its waters by virtue of his influence who represented the ancient unchanging truths.

The society that craves the water of spiritual life from the eternal Elisha to-day in our own land is still formed of these three allied elements. The ancient Church of England, containing the ancient doctrine of the creeds, the heavenly manna of the sacraments, the Aaronic rod

of a commissioned minister, and the promised presence of the Holy Spirit, represents the traditions of the hosts that drank out of the rock long ago in the wilderness. The selfishness of Solomon, the arrogance of Rehoboam, ecclesiastical abuses, tyrannical assumptions, have given vantage to the ambition of schismatic leaders to separate the tribes of the Lord's people. These tribes, separated, some less, some more completely from the old order, some adhering to the ancient truths, others yielding to the Baalim of nature-worship, are standing in this wilderness, side by side with the Church, craving drink for their souls. With those forces of the ancient traditional religion and of the new self-assertive, irregular, ever various religion, is that other force—the men of the world who do not profess any definite religious faith. They cannot live without water. How does the saving influence come into this kingly-formed society? Is it not the blessed privilege of the Church that she is chosen by Christ to be the channel of blessing to all in the land? Through the creeds, her forms of worships, her sacraments, her ministry, her theology, her literature, her spiritual power, her social influence, all religious bodies are indirectly influenced for good. From her even the men of the world amongst us derive their maxims of morality, their tone of life, the influences that give satisfaction and greatness. If the Church were absent from this land, would these blessings continue? May we not fear that Christ would say to the other leaders, "As the Lord of Hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, I would not look towards thee nor see thee."

III.—What was the instrumentality used by Elisha through which the Divine Power was quickened within him? "Now, bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass when the minstrel played that the hand of the Lord

came upon him." The minstrel had no power of miraculous influence, but his minstrelsy was a means ordained of God for raising the prophet into that state of feeling and inspiration, in which he was able, through God, to do mighty works.

What is this scene but an accurate prefiguring of the Church's revivals? When the mighty Elisha had compassion on the multitude of thirsty souls, hearing the voice of suppliants craving for the water spiritual, is about to open the ancient fountains of grace, He still prepares the way of the agency of sacred minstrelsy. The opening of the fountains of the great deep of spiritual life has always been marked by the revival of Church poetry and Church music. Forty years ago there was a great drought in our own land; the hosts of souls looked for water and there was none. The springs seemed to have been exhausted and the channels were empty, and the aspect of the Church was parched, withered, desolate, and myriads of souls were dying. The suppliant voice reached the ears of the eternal Elisha. He vouchsafed to promise the water of renewed life. Simultaneously with that promise came also the call, "Bring me now a minstrel?" In answer to that call sounded the sacred lyre of Keble and of many another Church poet, the highly trained choirs of our cathedrals, and the simple singers of our village churches and new formed chapels—all contributed their energies in obedience to that divine call; and as the Church's poetry and the Church's music came into play, the prophetical power of the ministry revived, the seers and teachers found a new inspiration, opened new wells of thought and feeling, and learnt to satisfy the souls that were athirst. "When the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord came upon him."

Who does not know that in many a parish where all was dry, and life withered, the revival of the village choir has been the first movement in a work that has caused the

streams of grace to flow? Who does not know that in all the dioceses of England and Wales the organised ministry of the Church's Choral Festival has been a blessed agency in opening up the springs of her life. Psalm lxxxvii. 5, 7—"Of Zion it shall be said . . . As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there; all my springs are in thee." Such also will be the order of the Church triumphant; there will be the voice of harpers, harping with their harps and singing a new song before the throne, and there will also be in response, "Pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb."

IV.—The practical work imposed upon the host "Make the valley full of ditches." It is not for man to create the saving streams. Through our Elisha, in the name of Christ alone, will the fountains of grace be opened, but it is for man to prepare the channels of grace in the valley of the Church as well as in the ground of his own soul; he must not forsake Christ, the first cause of grace, to look entirely to the broken cisterns of earth-born doctrines, but he must use the means which Christ has ordained for transmitting the water of the Holy Spirit.

Ah, brethren, there are many parishes in Wales where spiritual drought prevails, where men's souls are withering in the sun of the wilderness, parched by the fire of their nature. The streams that make glad the city of God do not thus cool and nourish the moral roots of being. Why is this? The surface of the valley has not been broken into ditches; the channels of grace have not been opened; the churches are closed from Monday till Saturday; the Word preached without demonstration of the spirit; the Sacraments are rarely and irreverently administered; devotional habits are not cultivated by priest or people. Elisha does not open the fountain of grace because this preliminary command has been

neglected: "Make the valley full of ditches." Ah, brethren, is there any of you who is obliged to confess that you have not found the stream that quenches the soul's thirst and makes its life fruitful and fresh? Why is this? Is it not because you have presented a hard surface toward the ministry of grace? Your life has never been furrowed by self-examination, by repentance, by prayer, by earnest efforts of devotion. There has been no endeavour to open up the depths of your nature. The hardened surface, burnt by the sun of the wilderness, trodden by every worldly influence, is presented to the ministry of the Church. The saving streams will not flow until you make the ditches in the valley.

If you obey this command of Elisha and come to him weary and heavy-laden to open up your inner soul before him, then silently but surely, without the wind of mild excitement, or the visible downfall of the rain, coming not by observation, but springing up you know not how, the water of spiritual grace will well up in your inner being. Seek Elisha, obey his commands, and he "will open fountains in the midst of the valleys and will make the wilderness a pool of water; you shall thirst no more; the sun shall not light on you nor any heat. For the Lamb shall lead you into living fountains of water."

Every year saw some new scheme for the advancement of the Church, and to the remotest mountain parish the new energy infused by Dean Edwards was pulsating. "Shew them (the Welsh people) the Church in all her fairness, and they will see the nakedness of sectarianism," he said. First and foremost it was necessary to secure a ministry who like wise stewards—wise with spiritual wisdom—could bring out of the storehouses of the Church the old treasures of divine learning, and, with the glow of national sentiment and cultivated oratory, present them in new forms adapted to the new age. The Bangor

Clerical Education Society for assisting gifted youths of poor means to obtain a university education was formed for this purpose. It soon had an income of £800 a year —the result of the Dean's canvass of the diocese for subscriptions. The young men thus helped had their university training supplemented by instruction in ministerial work during the long vacation from the Dean himself, at the Cathedral city.

But while advocating reforms, he was unsparing in his exposure of abuses. The burden of his letter to Mr Gladstone was the paramount necessity of appointing Welsh ministers, from bishops downwards, for the Welsh Church. This was illustrated by a rapid survey of her history — always bursting out into luxuriant life under Welsh bishops, as in the Tudor period; as regularly withering under chief shepherds alien in tongue and incapable of entering into the life and thoughts of the flock committed to their care.

A sermon preached before the Mayor and Corporation of Liverpool on Sunday, 25th May 1876, was a powerful arraignment of this alien policy as a violation of the Apostolic rule, "I am made all things to all men." "That ancient British race," the Dean said, "has the strongly marked features of an indestructible nationality, some of which are likely to survive till the last day has dawned on earth's history. . . . The temperament of the people is even a more distinct and possibly a more lasting characteristic of their nationality than their language." Then followed, in periods of burning indignation, proof upon proof of disastrous disregard of this fact of nationality, ending in a burst of patriotic lament, "A patriotic clergy would have led the people onward in the march of progress, would have impelled them to acquire the English language without forgetting their own, and would have preserved for them the priceless blessings of religious unity and social concord." At the Swansea

Church Congress, 9th October 1879, in a paper on "The Past and Present Position of the Church in Wales," he returned to the subject. With a magnificent audacity he exposed the weaknesses of the Church owing to the alien shepherds, and poured a torrent of scorn and withering sarcasm—as of burning lava—upon their ministrations. Many Churchmen trembled at such exposures. But the thoroughness of the disclosure was the measure of the Dean's faith in the Church, and confidence in her future. "These are facts which some would hide," said he. "The old Welsh principle, 'Truth against the world,' will prove to be the Welsh Church's best physician. To veil sores is not to heal them. . . . To unfold the worst symptoms is but to invite the remedies that will avail." The charge of inconsistency—"the bugbear of small minds"—he heeded not. The wise mother chides the faults of the children she idolises: so did he the faults and failings of the Church and the nation he loved.

"A patriot," one has said, "is a man who loves his country, and not a man who seeks to make his country love him." Such a patriot was Dean Edwards. He knew the Welsh people—their strength and their weaknesses—as few knew them. Welsh racial characteristics and temperament were articles of faith with him. He was familiar with all writings appreciative of Wales and its people. He so identified himself with the nation that its benefactors, ancient or modern, seemed to have conferred their favours upon him, and its detractors to have called in question his own reputation. Nothing delighted him more than the successes of Welshmen, whether it was the knighthood of Sir Hugh Owen or the position of young Welshmen in the Oxford or Cambridge Honours lists. He seemed to revel in all things Welsh. "I should like to get rid of my Welsh accent," said a young under-graduate to him. "Why?" he replied, "have you ever seen a Scotchman ashamed of his accent? or an Irishman of

his? And why should a Welshman be ashamed of his accent?" And yet he was a true imperialist. They (the Welsh people) feel that there are certain well-defined limits within which it will be for their own happiness and for the advantage of the Empire that they should cultivate their own special gifts and live their own life. As has been already implied, it was Dean Edwards who revealed Welsh Wales to English public men. He influenced Mr Gladstone, and through him the English political leaders of both parties.

The movement for securing Higher Education for Wales enlisted the Dean's warmest support. He believed in the capacities of young Welshmen to hold their own in the field of learning, provided they had equal advantages with their English competitors. Till that was assured, he maintained that Wales should receive special treatment, and strenuously opposed the proposals to throw open the scholarship of Jesus College. This belief was that the establishment of a number of efficient Grammar Schools would best meet the educational wants of Wales, but when he found that the people's mind was set upon a college or colleges, he laid aside his own view and threw himself into the movement. The University College at Bangor owes its existence to Dean Edwards. A strong attempt was made by the supporters of Aberystwyth College, numbering among them the most influential Welshmen of the day, to secure the adoption of Aberystwyth as a college for North Wales. This was only frustrated by the energetic action of the Dean, who succeeded in carrying at a meeting in Chester a resolution declaring that the college for North Wales should be situated within one of the North Wales counties. At the same time he expressed a strong hope, since realised, that a third Government grant might be obtained for Aberystwyth. It was the Dean that also prepared and argued the case for Bangor in the battle of the sites.

Two things more were necessary for the successful launching of the college. Its character, as fixed by charter, must be such as to commend it to Churchmen and Nonconformists alike. There was a prolonged struggle in the committee, but at last the Dean's arguments prevailed, and a clause was inserted in the charter making the institution non-residential, and so non-sectarian. It further remained to elicit for it the support of the wealthier class, who were mostly Church people. Dean Edwards undertook not only this task, but also, at the request of the council, in company with the Rev. James Donne, the labour of rousing the latent enthusiasm of Anglesey and Carnarvonshire. This was so effectively done that in a few days the contributions from Anglesey amounted to more than £5,000, and those of Carnarvonshire to £10,000. The generous tribute to his services at the time of his death that, had it not been for Dean Edwards there would have been no college at Bangor, was amply justified. Yet, at the celebration of its twenty-first anniversary, the name of Dean Edwards was not even mentioned—so short are men's memories—so short-lived is public gratitude.

Temperance was another cause in which his love for Wales enlisted him. His support greatly assisted the passing of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act; and the temperance platform knew no more powerful advocate. His great speech in Hope Hall, Liverpool, will never be forgotten by those who heard it. The whole question was lifted on to a higher plane. He spoke for an hour, amid frequent bursts of cheers, and at the end there was a wild waving of handkerchiefs and hats. This elevating of the subject was the result of his speeches in town and country alike. He approached the question from the high position of a priest and patriot.

It now remains to indicate, as briefly as may be, the principles which guided Dean Edwards in his efforts for

the reconciliation of his Church and his nation, both of which he loved so ardently, and served with such self-sacrificing devotion. The very ardour of his love allowed him no rest while its two objects were at variance. The two parties in the divinely-made marriage between the nation and its Church must be reconciled before the true happiness or the success of either can be secured. And he who, even during their variance, strikes at the one, injures the other.

This was the light in which he regarded the attack upon the Church. Patriotism, deep and far-seeing, was the spirit which animated his Church defence. The Church is God's appointed means for elevating and perfecting the nation. Liberationists, therefore, sinned against the nation's highest good : they sought to prejudice the people and stir them to plunder the divine hospital where alone their wounds and infirmities could be effectively healed. Hence the loftiness of tone as well as fierceness of attack in his encounters with the Church's opponents. In these encounters he did not seek to hide or deny the faults and imperfections of the Church. He readily acknowledged that she is imperfect, but maintained that her failings were not organic but functional. On the other hand, he faced his opponents' position squarely, and by the high standpoint from which he viewed the question, his powerful intellect and oratorical gifts, animated by his fervent convictions, outranged his opponents' artillery. After one of these encounters the Rev. "J. R.," in his quaint style, admitted in "Y Cronicl," that the Liberation Society frigate was no match for the battery from Bangor.

In 1870, when the views of the Birmingham League threatened the complete secularisation of elementary education, the then Vicar of Carnarvon and the Rev. Daniel Evans of Corris took the field and waged giant conflicts against the Godless education with which the rising generation in Wales was threatened. They attacked

the enemy in their very strongholds. Wales has seen no stormier meetings. And when the smoke and dust of battle cleared away, it was seen that the panic among Churchmen had been allayed, and left them determined to hold the National Schools as fortified lines behind which religious education could be still imparted, and a protest raised against the banishment of the Bible from the children's educational nurseries.

From that time he never laid the sword aside, but while energetically engaged in building the walls, he was continually, in articles, debates, and speeches, repelling the attacks of the Church's enemies and encouraging her friends. This culminated in his great speech at the Guildhall, Carnarvon, 20th December 1883, which contained the last word on the subject. He examined the scriptural aspect of the question, and showed that rightly understood the Scripture position of his opponents was untenable. Endowments, position, social and official, wealth, etc., were gifts of God, and to be used for His glory and for the advancement of His Kingdom. The endowments of the Church are the candlestick upon which the Gospel Candle is set. The history and work of the Church are her best defence. Reforms are desirable. But "if we would elevate our race among the nations, we must cast out the evil spirit of petty strife and division, we must seek a nobler, purer enlightenment: we must renew the broken bands of brotherhood: we must seek the inspiration of eternal love: we must regret the superficial platitudes of holy Churchism: we must strive to realise more profoundly the Divinity of that Lord who is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house."

The same love which animated his defence of the Church made him long for reunion with Dissenters. He recognised to the full the good they had done. He acknowledged and admired their abilities. He developed

his theory of a possible reunion in a paper read at the Bangor Diocesan Conference in 1880. "There should be more co-operation but less compromise! The evils of division must be fully realised. The spirit of Babel destroyed unity. The spirit of Pentecost renews it." The parish church in each parish is the place which the Lord hath chosen to cause His name to dwell there—where the doctrine and fellowship of the Apostles are to be found. The parish altar must therefore be the centre of unity. On the other hand, the past must be taken account of. Unity, not uniformity, should be the aim. The various nonconforming bodies, separated from the Church by no great theological or doctrinal differences, should retain their separate places of worship as the synagogues of old, and go up to the Jerusalem of the parish church—the centre of unity—three times in the year to foregather at the one altar, in a visible unity of spirit which is the bond of peace and the essential condition of the fulness of love.

We, believers in the Church's unity, will say, "You, our brethren, who justify corporate disunion, who fondly cherish faith in such a figment as a fragmentary Christianity, and after a hundred "splits" dream that in disunited bodies unity of spirit can dwell,—we believe that you are fighting under a flag that represents a false cause. You may reject our advances, shut your ears against our arguments, forget the Scriptures that rebuke, and read only the texts that encourage you; you may call our firm convictions bigotry, and you may ignore the evils of disunion that force themselves upon unprejudiced minds every day and hour; but we dare not give up what we believe to be a divine truth. We dare not sacrifice true liberty for the sake of false order at the bidding of Rome, nor yet true order for the sake of a spurious liberty at the bidding of Geneva. The house of God in which the Shechinah will shine in its full brightness is one. "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." Reunion

will come. The tendency to aggregation among peoples, the spirit of combination and co-operation among men, is abroad in the material sphere, and will soon come into the spiritual.

Unity will not come back in its old form. The unity of a people educated to think for themselves will not be the old unity of a people glad to follow their leaders. The old unity was that of acquiescence; the new unity will be the nobler unity of tried conviction. Reunion may not come for centuries, but come it will. Who shall live to see it? We only know that division must cease when the hour comes in response to that Almighty prayer, "Sanctify them through thy truth . . . that they may be made perfect in One; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me."

Other people saw only the objections. He, uplifted by his faith in the all-prevailing power of the Saviour's prayer, beheld the day approaching. "Give me twenty years of power, and I will win them," he used to declare. God ordained otherwise for the Welsh Church, and the Welsh nation lost the son, best beloved of both, in the midst of his efforts to reunite what God had joined together but what man hath partly put asunder.

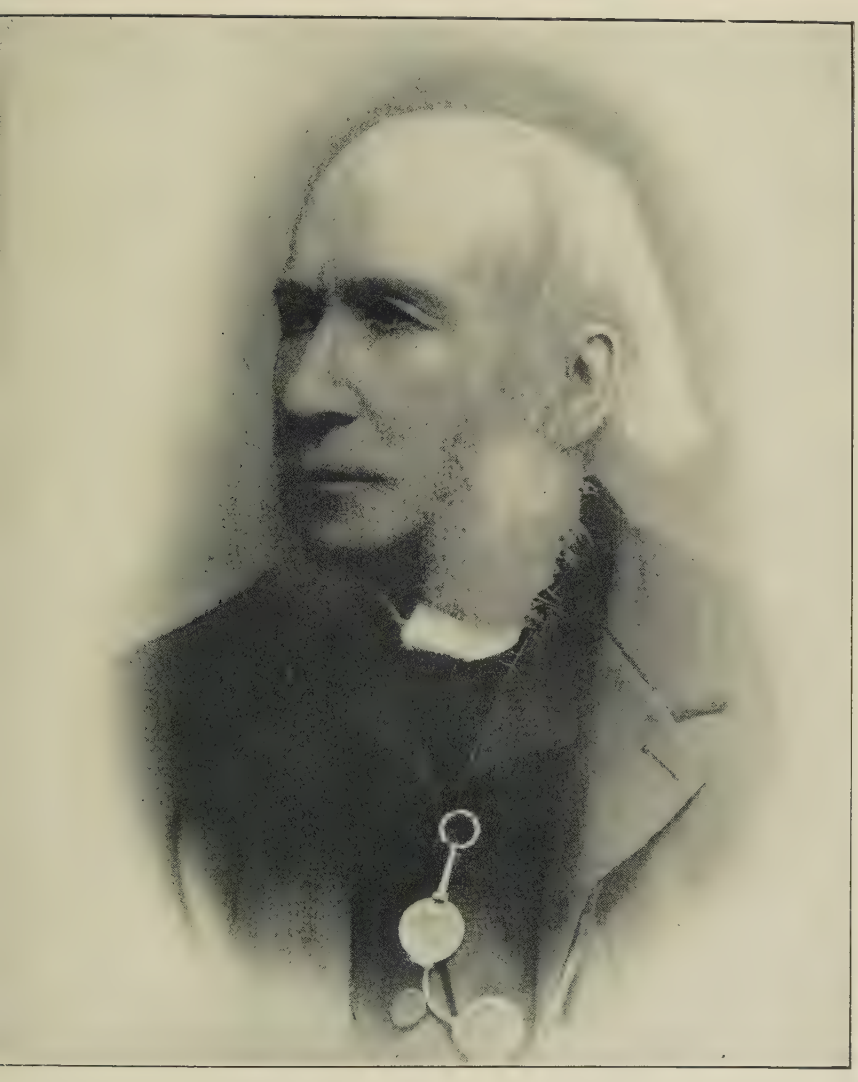
The Ven. JOHN GRIFFITHS, Archdeacon of Llandaff

By the Rev. PETER WILLIAMS, Troedyrhiw.

The quiet rural county of Cardigan has given to Wales some of her most eminent sons, and amongst the foremost of these we venture to place John Griffiths. Away from the noise and bustle of towns, and amidst the peaceful solitude of Nature, in the beautiful vale of Aeron, and well up its sloping side, Parcyneuadd is situated—the humble farmstead under whose roof John Griffiths was born in the year 1820. His parents seem to have resided at Parcyneuadd but for a brief period while Dôlygwartheg, a small but cosy mansion nearer the town of Aberaeron, was being prepared for their abode. On his father's side he descended from the well-known and respected family of Llangolman in North Pembrokeshire. His mother was one of the Normans of Laugharne in Carmarthenshire—a daughter of Thomas Powell of that place; and of her, in after life, he spoke with great affection.

In looking back to the time of his birth, it is impossible not to see the great changes and developments that have taken place since then even in this slow-moving country. Commercial, educational, and ecclesiastical life has made considerable forward strides during this period. He lived to see all this, and to take an interest in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the land of his birth.

Owing to his father's connection, as agent, with the



Archdeacon GRIFFITHS of Landaff. [*To face p.* 86

Monachty and Tyglyn Aeron estates, he had the advantage of an early training which fitted him for his future career. The Rev John Lewis, Vicar of Llanrhystyd, was engaged as private tutor to the landlord's son, and the son of the agent was allowed to receive his tuition from the same source. A great and genuine friendship sprang up between the boys which lasted during the whole of their lifetime. Later on, he was removed to the Cardigan Grammar School, where he studied for a few years. When in due course he entered the newly opened Saint David's College at Lampeter, he possessed a knowledge of the classics far above the average of his fellow-students. From what we can glean, he had a brilliant career at Lampeter College, and at its close was appointed by the trustees to the headmastership of his old Grammar School at Cardigan, where he worked successfully for three or four years. When he became of age to take Holy Orders in the Church of England, he accepted a title to the Curacy of Blaenau, and was ordained by Bishop Copleston in 1844. The following year, when he was admitted to the Priesthood, the Bishop offered him the newly created ecclesiastical parish of Nantyglo, which he accepted. After a useful ministry of about three years at Nantyglo, he was appointed to the Rectory of Llansannor, in the Vale of Glamorgan, upon the nomination of Sir Joseph Bailey. At the same time he received the Vicarage of Llangan, the scene of the labours of the renowned Davydd Jones. In 1847 Sir Digby Aubrey offered him the Vicarage of Saint Mary Hill, in the same locality. In 1855, upon the nomination of the trustees of the Marquis of Bute, he was presented to the important Rectory of Neath with Lantwit. In 1861, at the request of the great Bishop Thirlwall of Saint David's, he accepted the important living of Llanbadarn Fawr and Aberystwyth ; but before the institution took place, he withdrew his acceptance of

it, and remained for the rest of his days at Neath. In 1873 he was appointed Rural Dean of Groneath Higher. In 1875 he was appointed the Welsh Examining Chaplain of the Bishop of Llandaff. In 1877 he was made a Residentiary Canon, and Archdeacon of Llandaff. This was the highest pinnacle, by way of Church preferment, that he ever reached. His death took place at Neath, the scene of his labours for over forty years, and his remains were laid to rest in the churchyard of Hen Fynyw, within sound of the rippling waves of his beloved Cardigan Bay, and almost within sight of the home of his boyhood.

As we look back upon the history and lifework of Archdeacon Griffiths, and attempt to give him a position and place among contemporary leaders of thought in Wales, much will naturally depend upon the standpoint we take in doing this ; whether we look at him through a Churchman's glasses or through a Nonconformist's spectacles, or whether we divest ourselves of these paltry extraneous aids, and see in him the Man, the Patriot, and the Christian. An eminent Nonconformist minister, in paying him a high tribute of affection and regard, stated from the pulpit on the first Sunday after his death that " He was Nonconformist in everything but the name." Probably to many a narrow-minded Churchman, of a certain type, this view of the Archdeacon's Churchmanship would be an agreeable one. But he was the Christian first, then the Churchman. To those who knew him best—knew of his intense love for the Prayer Book and its beautiful services, and of his profound veneration for the traditions of the Church of his forefathers—he must have appealed and caused them to regard him as a most loyal and worthy son of the National Church.

Ninety years ago, the educational and religious condition of Wales was deplorable. The Church had

slumbered long and sound, but was just slowly awakening to a new life of Christian activity. Her ministers, from the highest to the lowest, took but little real interest in the moral and social well-being of the Principality. It was indeed a time of deadness and calm which immediately preceded a period of great vigour and earnestness for God's work. It gave birth to the Methodist movement which swept over the country like a mighty wave, and which fanned into vigorous flame the well-nigh dead spirit of the Church. Godly men saw what was wanted not only for Wales but for England as well; and they took counsel together to supply the needs of the times. Societies were formed such as the Bible Society and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, for printing and supplying Bibles and Christian literature to the people; the National Society and the British School Society, for providing elementary education for the young; and the Church Pastoral Aid Society, together with other kindred societies, for supplying additional curates for the Church's ministry. These societies brought about a wonderful change throughout the country. No stronger supporter of them was to be found in Wales than the Archdeacon.

The Church in Wales was in a lethargic state, but yet, within her pale, were to be found men who were most anxious to see her again strong and powerful. There arose men of great eloquence and earnestness who made themselves felt in the pulpits of Wales, and whose names to-day are honoured names amongst us. They were imbued with the one desire of leading men to Christ — simple, plain, earnest Evangelical men, endued with power from on high, and who thought less of the Church than of the Christ. They were men of extraordinary pulpit abilities, whose one aim was the glory of God and the salvation of souls. They were

not many in number, but they were like beacons shedding forth the Gospel light on the Hills of Zion in those dark and gloomy days. This was the period in which the Archdeacon saw the light of day, and such were the influences surrounding his early life. One cannot wonder then that these influences left an indelible impression upon his thought and character. In his early ministerial career he came into close contact with these men, and many a time have I listened to him describing, with great eloquence and pathos, these prophets of God, swaying the multitude with the "good news" of God and heaven—"Jones y Faenor," that fine classical scholar, thundering forth, like a Boanerges, the denunciations of God against sin until sinners trembled; "Griffiths bach Llandeilo," the Chrysostom of the day, perhaps the most eloquent, popular, and poetic preacher that ever ascended a Welsh pulpit, always attracted the thousands to hear him; "Parry o Lywel," the Melville of Wales, with his sweet and mellow phrases teaching the love of God and the sacrifice of Christ, bringing tears to the eyes of the hardened sinner, and joy to the heart of the child of God. These were the men in those days who stirred up the Welsh Church, and they were ably supported by Hughes Tregaron, Griffiths Machynlleth, Hughes Llanddyfri, and others. The Archdeacon formed one of the noble band, and, fired by intense enthusiasm and love for evangelical truth—from which he never wavered—he consecrated his whole life to the service of his country and of his God.

Sixty years ago no leader had a clearer insight as to the needs of his country than he, and no patriot ever devoted his energies with greater zeal to the uplifting of his nation. Throughout the past half century, moved solely by his love of country, he devoted his time, talents, and means to purify and establish

on sound basis the National Eisteddfod of Wales. He saw in it the instrument, and probably the only one, by which the divided sections of the nation could be united. Its platform was the only one on which political differences disappeared and sectarian strife and bitterness were silent. It served him as the ideal for a united Wales. Year after year his eloquent voice was heard from its platform, and his wise counsel given in its committee meetings. His fine and noble presence, his perfervid oratory and unbounded enthusiasm, his deep and sonorous voice, his able advocacy of, and his undying love for, his country, made him at all times a *persona grata* to the multitude at our National Assembly. The first time I heard and saw him was at the National Eisteddfod at Carmarthen in 1866. I was then quite a lad, but I well remember to-day his eloquent speech, wherein he described, in imagination, the Great Eisteddfod held at Carmarthen in the reign of Henry VI., when Gruffydd ap Nicholas, Lord of Dinefwr, was in the chair; and how he prayed for the day when our nobles would again come forward to support our Welsh institutions.

His great ambition was to see a whole and undivided Wales. It was for him a proud moment when he stood on the platform of the National Eisteddfod at Carnarvon in 1862 as the representative of the Southern Division, and Myfyr Mon as the representative of the Northern Division of the Principality, joined hand to hand, amid the applause of the assembled thousands, and declared the consummation of the union hoped for, for ages past. This was the union of patriots and *literati*, and the question forced itself to his mind, "Was it not possible to have a united religious Wales as well?" He understood Nonconformity as well as any man, and was very kind and tender to those who differed from him, but at the same time he

deeply deplored the sectarianism of the Principality. He saw but little need of it. To his mind there was no fundamental difference of doctrine separating Dissent from the Church. It would take a clever man to distinguish any real difference between the best sermons of Dissent and the best sermons of the Church. At Llandrindod in those days the great religious patriarchs of Wales met in the summer time, and discussed in the most friendly manner the topics of the day. Henry Richard, Thomas Gee, Hiraethog, Archdeacon Griffiths, and others were there, and whatever their differences might be, they were one in desiring the welfare of their beloved country. The point of reuniting the Welsh religious bodies to the Church was seriously and earnestly discussed amongst them more than once. I remember the Archdeacon nearly forty years ago raising the question of the restoration of its archbishopric to Wales, and its probable effect upon the religious life of the country. The idea seemed to please them all, and they agreed that it would be a grand thing, if it could be carried out, to unite Wales—both Church and Nonconformity—under the wing of such a dignitary. The difficulty of "Orders" was a big one, but not an insuperable difficulty to men fired with an intense desire to restore and preserve the "unity of the faith." Hiraethog hinted that God would have to raise a second Saint David before this could be brought about. The Archdeacon, without any hesitation, answered that the man was ready—a man bearing the old name, and fired with the same Christian enthusiasm and zeal as his great predecessor — that man was David Howell ("Llawdden"). Men to-day would probably laugh with scorn at such vain and worthless attempts at unity; but the times have changed. The Archdeacon was a man who loved his country and his Church, and believed intensely in

the need of exercising Christian forbearance and brotherly love. Hence his great idea for unity of worship in Wales. He would have buried all narrow bigotry and animosity in his desire to unite under one religious banner the whole of Wales.

It was at the Llangollen Eisteddfod in 1858 that an attempt was made to put the National Assembly on a sound working basis, and Creuddynfab and Glan Alun were appointed to prepare a scheme, and submit it for approval at the next gathering. In 1860, at the Denbigh Eisteddfod, a committee was formed, composed of an equal number of representatives from North and South Wales. This formed the basis of the National Council which has been in existence since those days. The prominent men connected with it at the start were Ambrose Lloyd, Talhaiarn, Myfyr Môn, Sir Hugh Owen, the Archdeacon, and others. The Archdeacon was selected as Chairman of the Council, and he continued to act as such for the next ten or twelve years. A little later on, he, with Sir Hugh Owen and a few others, played an important part in developing and carrying out the Welsh educational movement. It resulted, after long years of struggle, in securing for Wales the excellent system of Higher Education which she now possesses. The Archdeacon's close friendship with the late Lord Aberdare induced his lordship to use his influence with Mr Gladstone, the then Prime Minister, and thus securing a treasury grant of £3,000 a year for the support of Aberystwyth College. He lived to see the establishment of the other Welsh colleges which won for us our Welsh University. Young Wales of to-day ought to feel grateful to the noble patriots who worked unceasingly, and often under adverse circumstances, to secure for them such excellent educational facilities as they now possess. One or two only of the pioneers of the movement remain with us, and those in authority

to-day are slow in conferring upon them the honour which they so richly deserve.

No man ever loved his mother tongue more than the Archdeacon, and he was always most anxious that parents should teach the language to their children. He was also wishful that it should be recognised as a medium of instruction in the elementary day schools of Wales. With this object in view, the Welsh Utilisation Society was formed, and of which he was President for many years. That object has now been gained, and the teaching of Welsh finds a place in the "Education Code," and many authorities and government inspectors of schools give encouragement and facilities for carrying it out.

His predecessor at Neath was the Rev. Henry Knight, a ripe scholar and a Christian gentleman, but who lacked the knowledge of Welsh. He would have done credit to any English parish, but was out of place as rector of such a parish as Neath. There had been no Welsh service held in the church at Neath for about a century previous to the advent of the Archdeacon, and his first care was to restore, as soon as possible, to the Welsh people the privilege of worshipping in their own parish church in their own mother tongue. He could see, however, that it was almost a hopeless struggle to try and win back to the Church those who had made their home with Nonconformity. Little could he blame those who had severed their connection with the Church, and had provided for themselves elsewhere places of worship where they could be ministered to in their own language. He knew it was late to try and improve matters, but with strong faith in the Mother Church of the land, he determined to do what he could by reinstating Welsh services in the parish church and elsewhere. It is no wonder that the Welsh Church was at a low ebb sixty years ago—and is not even to-day what we should like

to see her—when we remember that her chief positions were filled by monoglot Englishmen, or at any rate by men who had but an imperfect knowledge of the Welsh language, by men who knew not the needs, and cared not for the aspirations of the Welsh people, and therefore could not be their Christian leaders and teachers. The Church must be a divine institution, or else she could never have survived such treatment as she then received at the hands of those in authority. Thank God, a change has been wrought at last by the influence of such men as Archdeacon Griffiths, and the knowledge of the Welsh language is no longer a disgrace, and Welsh eloquence is no longer a barrier to promotion in the Church.

As Welsh Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Llandaff, he used the position to impress upon the young men who came up for Holy Orders the need of good Welsh reading and preaching. A young friend of mine who had done well at Oxford, and had no low opinion of his own powers, went in for his Welsh examination. After a most friendly greeting and a chat, he was asked by the Archdeacon to read a passage from a Welsh book—probably the Bible; but my friend had not gone on far before he heard the grave old man thundering forth, "Stop, stop! young man. None of your nice namby-pamby Oxford twang. That style will not suit the Welsh. They must have the real genuine article, without any 'llediaith' at all. Listen"—and he then gave him an example of how the passage should be read. Then he "talked" to him. These "talks" were indeed precious things, and never forgotten. He acted like a father in God to the young men who were just entering the ministry, and gave them, from his long and varied experience, advice that would always prove useful to them. He remembered well the time, fifty years ago, when he himself entered upon his ministerial career on the hills of Monmouthshire. Those were the days when

the great ironworks were in full blast, and the Guests and Hills and Crawshays ruled supreme. Crawshay Bailey was king at Nantyglo and the surrounding district. These men were rough and uncouth in their dealings with their workmen, but yet, under the rough surface, there was much kindness and generosity of nature. Crawshay took a great liking to the young curate, and although he was not what might be termed a religious man, yet he much admired his pulpit eloquence and zeal. The managers, who lived some distance away, came to church in their "cubs." These were some sort of trams or rough carriages which ran on rails, and there was quite a row of them outside the church during service on Sundays. It was a queer sight, but in those days, in these hill districts, locomotion by road was almost impossible. Crawshay was given to much hospitality, and the time most convenient for his purpose was as a rule the Sunday. Many of the "lively spirits" of the district came together under his roof to enjoy the good things of his table. After dinner he made it a point to invite them to go with him to the evening service in church, and to hear the eloquence of his young friend the Welshman. Having imbibed rather too freely of Crawshay's exhilarating wine, they were not always the most reverent in their behaviour in church. On one occasion when the church was crowded with an attentive congregation, Crawshay's guests came and seated themselves in the family pews right in front of the pulpit. The preacher, fired, if possible, with greater enthusiasm than usual, was delivering his message with great power and earnestness, and just when he was at the height of an impassioned passage, and the vast congregation was thrilled with his eloquence, one of Crawshay's "old boys," just awakening a little from his nap, struck the pew with his fist, and shouted, "Another bottle of that '16 port, please. It is rare good

stuff!" We must guess rather than describe the feelings of the preacher under the circumstances. He told me that he went home and wept like a child because of what had happened, and it was not long after this event before he left Nantyglo for Llansannor.

When he began his ministry, his great ambition was to become what is known as an extempore preacher. He started early what are called "Cottage Lectures" from house to house. These became very popular, and many people attended them who never frequented any other place of worship. The bell-ringer and sexton —a good, kind old Christian man—was always with him to start the singing, and sometimes to take part in the simple service. He had not hitherto tried to "extemporise," but was fully determined to make the effort. After very careful preparation during the day, he determined to let forth that evening. He gave out his text, and started well, but in less than five minutes he felt himself drifting into a fog, and in another minute it got pitch dark with him, and not a sentence could he utter—and he sat down. The old sexton came and clapped him kindly on the shoulder, saying, "Come, come, young man. Don't break your heart. I have seen such as this happen before. Take courage. God will yet crown your efforts." And he did. A few years later, "Jones y Faenor" was to preach at the opening of a new church in the Vale. The people had come together in large numbers as usual in the expectation of hearing the great man. When John Griffiths arrived it was late, and the service had been read. He was entering the church as quietly as possible, he thought, an unknown man. But the old vicar saw him and wended his way towards him, and, taking off his surplice, placed it on him, and said, "Something has happened to Jones. You must preach instead of him." It was in vain to protest that he was not

prepared. Resistance was useless—he was forced into the pulpit. All eyes were fixed on the young man under the extraordinary circumstances. He prayed, and God blessed his efforts. It was a wonderful service and a wonderful sermon—all extempore!

One who knew the Archdeacon intimately has supplied me with the following description of him as a preacher.

As a pulpit orator in his best days he deserves to rank among the great preachers of Wales. Who was so welcome as he on the occasion of a church opening or of a harvest festival? It was sufficient to announce the Rector of Neath to draw a large congregation. Dissenters came as well as Church people, and all felt the spell of his eloquence. He was a Chrysostom in the pulpit. His style of preaching was expository. He felt the sympathy of numbers, and as he warmed with his subject, his eye would kindle, his fine and expressive face would be lighted up, and he would pour forth a torrent of eloquence which held the listeners spell-bound. I shall never forget the sermon which he preached in a theatre on the Corporation Field on the eve of the great September Fair at Neath. "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ—we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." St Paul seems to have been his great model, and the doctrine of justification by faith, as set forth in the Epistle to the Romans, his favourite topic. He was not like the great Archbishop Magee, who never lost the sequence of his theme; but though he sometimes wandered from his text, as a new thought occurred to him, a crowded congregation never grew tired of listening for three quarters of an hour, and sometimes longer, to their rector, who had such power by voice and gesture of swaying a multitude of people. I have been carried back to the past when I listened and enjoyed the

sermon as much as any one in the congregation at Saint David's Church, Neath. In the early years of his life the cause of temperance was by no means a popular one, and he who took a "little drop too much" occasionally was not deemed worthy of censure by the Church or by society. The great majority of his countrymen saw no harm at all in taking a "little drop" now and again, and sometimes, indeed, indulged rather too freely in the cup that inebriates. This was not considered a serious offence by any one in those days. In the rural districts especially, an abstainer was looked upon as a faddist. On market days it was unneighbourly for the farmers to meet and not to have a glass or two together at the public house in town, with the result that some of them returned to their homes in rather a helpless condition. When the Archdeacon came to Neath he soon saw the baneful effects of intemperance, and determined to try to counteract the attractions of the drink by holding popular Saturday evening meetings in the town. He became a total abstainer by a remark made by an old Quaker, to whom he had complained that he was not making as many temperance converts as he would wish, who told him: "Thou hast tried what speaking will do and what preaching will do: try now what thy example will do." In a short time afterwards he was looked upon as a foremost temperance leader and reformer. He travelled up and down Wales advocating the cause of temperance with all the energy he possessed. When I was rector of a parish in Lleyn there were many old men alive there who well remembered him lecturing on "Dirwest" at Pwllheli more than forty years before, and his enthusiasm and persuasive eloquence would never be forgotten by them. The power of his example was contagious. Dean Howell caught it, while curate of Neath, and became one of the most

eloquent advocates of temperance in all Wales. Bishop Hughes of Llandaff and Vicar Buckley — old curates of Neath—have for the past twenty years been the mainstay of the C.E.T.S. in this diocese. The temperance cause had not been organised in his early days, and the work was carried on by individuals without an attempt at united effort. To-day we have powerful organisations at work, and the cause has gained immensely in popularity and influence. We may well say that his heart would be glad to see the great temperance organisations of to-day, as the betterment of the people of his beloved Wales was the great motive of all his work.

The Welsh people of his early days hated Roman Catholicism, and considered it a most disloyal act on the part of some of the clergy of the Church of England who tried to imitate it. He had intense dislike for sacerdotalism in all shapes and forms. He knew and felt that ornate services and high ritual were not the means to bring back the Welsh people to the Church of their fathers. Those who know Wales to-day must confess that he was right. The Oxford Movement has never touched the Welsh mind. It did appeal to the sympathy of some of the Welsh clergy — good and earnest men, and strong in their love for *the Church*— who perhaps had come in contact with the originators of the movement in their under-graduate days at Oxford. Such men were Dean Lewis of Bangor; Constable Ellis, Llanfairfechan; Canon Jenkins, Aberdare; and G. Arthur Jones, Cardiff. They made the attempt to raise the *altar* by lowering the *pulpit*. They have but few followers amongst the Welsh people. The successful leaders of the Church in Llandaff were all Evangelical men, and they have left their mark on the Church in the diocese. These men were Lodwick Edwards of Rhymney (succeeded by Canon Evans), Hughes of

Ebbw Vale, Leigh of Eglwysilan, Griffith of Merthyr, Thomas of Skewen, the Rector of Neath, and others—all men who believed in the attractiveness of the pulpit. These were the men who kept the light of the Gospel burning in the Church then ; and we have their successors to-day in the persons of Archdeacon Bruce, Canon Lewis, J. R. Buckley, W. R. Thomas, and others. There might have been greater scholars and men of higher academical distinctions, but those I have named, and their like, were the men who suited their day and generation best.

We cannot exactly measure the Archdeacon's immense influence over those with whom he came in contact, but we do know that he always gave wise counsel to the many young men who sought his advice and guidance. He possessed, in a rare degree, that power of perception to detect dormant ability and genius, and a fascinating way of quickening and drawing out the same. His own enthusiasm and marvellous eloquence acted like magnets, attracting and impelling others to try and follow, however distantly, in his step. Welshmen who were privileged to hear the late Dean Howell —one of Wales's greatest orators—preach or lecture, should always remember that he received his inspiration from his great master, Archdeacon Griffiths. It was he who really discovered Llawdden following the plough on his father's farm in the Vale of Glamorgan, and in the name of Christ called him to the work of the Church. It was at Neath he received his first ministerial training as curate, which so eminently fitted him to fill the higher positions in the Church. He was never slow in acknowledging his great indebtedness to the noble example set him by the Archdeacon. We in the Diocese of Llandaff cannot but feel grateful to the Rector of Neath for the man of sound judgment and Christian earnestness that sits on our episcopal throne to-day ;

while the eloquent Vicar of Llandaff is also one who for some years sat at the feet of our Gamaliel. It was impossible for any of us who had the privilege of working under him, and of knowing him intimately, not to admire his noble character, his kindly and sympathetic nature, and his wonderful love for the Word of God, and to feel ourselves inspired with higher aims and loftier ideals of life. The Church in Wales is poorer to-day by the loss of such a man, but it would have been much the poorer if God had not consecrated to her services the ability, the enthusiasm, and the eloquence of Archdeacon Griffiths.

I cannot do better than close this sketch of my loving friend and master in the words of a biography which appeared in one of the daily papers at the time of his death :—

"His decease will, of course, primarily affect the Church, of which he was such a distinguished ornament; but it means much more than this. It is a national loss, and Nonconformists will deplore his disappearance from the scene as sincerely and as heartily as members of his own community. Everybody will miss him—miss his genial presence and his familiar figure—for he was the best known of our Welsh dignitaries, if not, indeed, of all our public men. The Church in the Principality can ill afford to lose him. Of ability, scholarship, culture, the Church had enough and to spare, but it is deficient in men of conspicuous pulpit power. Nor is this deficiency felt in the Church alone; it is characteristic also of Nonconformity. Pulpit oratory is on the decline in Wales, and probably will never again be the power it used to be until the whole nation will have undergone its translation and become English in speech. The conditions of modern life are not favourable to the development of oratory, especially of that dual kind of which Archdeacon Griffiths was master. One regrets sometimes that education moulds men to-day so much alike one another in mental stature, and takes so little

account of individuality. Happily that of John Griffiths survived the period of his pupilage, and years only tended to develop it more and more, until he became one of the most beautifully original and picturesque personalities in the whole country. The Church in Wales has not fully realised his value. It is not too much to say that he did more than any man of his time to popularise it among the masses. His Churchmanship was broad and comprehensive, and of a kind that surfeited not Welsh Nonconformists, however bitter against the establishment they might be. He was essentially of a conciliatory nature, and the services he rendered to his Church and nation as a peace maker and peace bearer are incalculable. Welshmen of all creeds and of all grades simply loved him, and were never tired of speaking of him, for he filled their ideal of a national man.

"Thou noble spirit, take thy well-earned rest,
Fallen hast thou on sleep, and God knows best.
He sent thee to adorn thy native land,
Large heart to love, strong brain to understand.
And thou didst understand. Thy voice could touch
And rouse to fire the listening Cymry. Such
As thou we sorely need in this our day,
So wise to counsel, and to lead the way.
Strong Churchman, yet no church confined thy love,
Wider than dogma, and than sect above.
The vast temple, the wayside Bethel small,
Will mourn thy loss, united one and all:
Will mourn a prince of Israel indeed;
One in their tears, though wide apart in creed.
Thy massive face, thy reverend crown of snow,
Thy noble mien no more thy Wales shall know;
But love—a people's love—will fragrant keep
Thy memory, and thou—rest in thine honoured sleep."

DEAN HOWELL

By the Rev. J. VYRNWY MORGAN, D.D.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

David Howell was born on 16th August 1831, at Treoes, in the parish of Llangan, in the Vale of Glamorgan, the scene of the labours of the celebrated clergyman, the Rev. David Jones. His father, John Howell, was an independent farmer, a deacon with the Calvinistic Methodists, and for many years secretary of the Monthly Meeting or Presbytery of that body which covered the whole of Glamorgan. His mother enjoyed but poor health, consequently his grandmother, Mary Griffiths of Ty'nycaeau, who was a Churchwoman, took him home with her and adopted him until he was fifteen years old, when he returned to the home of his father and mother at Bryncwttyn, near Pencoed, Llangrallo; but he only remained under the parental roof a year, finding, it seems, the new discipline uncongenial to him. So he was practically brought up by his grandparents on the maternal side. Between the age of sixteen and eighteen, young David Howell heard some of the best preachers at Salem Chapel, Pencoed, such as John Jones, Talysarn; Henry Rees, Liverpool; William Morris, Cilgerran; Cadwaladr Owen, Dolyddelen; William Evans, Tonyrefail; John James, Penybont; Edward Matthews, Ewenny; Daniel Griffiths, Castellnedd; and Howell Thomas; and undoubtedly the influence of their preaching remained with him throughout his life. When nineteen years of

DEAN HOWELL. [*To face p.* 104

age he married Miss Ann Powell, Pencoed, who was a member of the Salem congregation, but whether she was a regular communicant is uncertain. David Howell was never a full member with the Methodists. He used to go very frequently with his grandmother to the Independent Chapel at Treoes, to hear the Rev. W. Griffiths, Llanharran, and it was there that he learnt Welsh. The rector of the parish at that time was the Ven. Archdeacon Griffiths of Neath. Rector Griffiths was a far-sighted man, and he induced David to attend the Church of England services at Llangan and St Mary Hill, where he officiated, and at last encouraged him to turn his thoughts to the ministry. John Howell, the father, consulted the rector as to the best course to take in preparing his son for the sacred calling to which he now aspired. David's mother was altogether in sympathy with her son's hopes, and it was at last settled that he should first go to the Eagle School at Cowbridge. From there he went to the Merthyr Preparatory School, and subsequently to the Llandaff Diocesan Divinity School at Abergavenny, under Canon Williams. It was an oft-expressed regret of David Howell that the rector had not advised his father to send him to Oxford or Cambridge. He always felt the want of a University training in his later ministry. He was ordained deacon in 1855 by Dr Ollivant, Bishop of Llandaff, and priest in 1856. His first and only curacy was at Neath, where Archdeacon Griffiths was rector (and who was also Rector of Llangan during David Howell's boyhood). In 1857 he was appointed association secretary to the Church Pastoral Aid Society, a position which he held until 1861. In his secretarial capacity he visited all the Welsh dioceses, and attained considerable reputation as a preacher and platform speaker. It was at this time that the monthly preaching services in the Church were initiated. They proved a source of power and inspiration. Among those who took part were Parry of

Llywel, Griffiths of Llandeilo, Bishop Hughes, Jones of Llansadwrn, Richards of Caerwys, and Llawdden himself. This was the Pentecostal period in the history of the Welsh Church in Wales.

In 1861 he accepted the living of Pwllheli offered him by Bishop Campbell of Bangor. While at Pwllheli he started *Y Cyfaill Eglwysig*, a Welsh church monthly. During this time he made the acquaintance of Canon Robert Williams of Llanfaelog, and Canon Eleazer Williams of Llangefni, Angiesey. These were strong evangelical men, and that in the narrow sense of the term, though he was broader, and on that account they were seriously concerned as to his evangelical orthodoxy. In 1864 he was appointed by the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester to become Vicar of St John's, Cardiff, where he was eminently successful. Hitherto his fame was confined to the Welsh, but in Cardiff a new sphere was opened for him, and from this to the end of his life his ministrations were chiefly English. He took much interest in education. He sought to establish new churches, new schools, and he left the parish of St John's full of life and activity with day and Sunday schools, and other organisations. He brought the church of Cardiff into touch with the public life of the town, and it is said he collected £30,000 for the Church during this period. When he settled in the town there were two services held at St John's and two at St Andrew's every Sunday. There were two Church schools containing a little more than two hundred scholars. When he left in 1875, after eleven years' ministry, instead of four weekly services there were thirteen; in place of two schools there were six; the children attending them were one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five against two hundred; and at the Sunday School, which was practically a new institution, there were one thousand eight hundred scholars, ranging in age from five years to seventy. He was elected member of the first School Board for Cardiff

in 1875, and was succeeded by Canon Thompson. He was also, some years later, elected member of the Council of the University College. He gave up two evenings a week for a long period to give the late Lord Bute lessons in Welsh. The vicar's warden at St John's was A. W. Seargeant, Esq., and the people's warden, T. H. Stephens, Esq., who have served in that capacity for a period of about thirty-two years. Through his instrumentality, the old vicarage adjacent to the church in St John's Square was removed, and a new vicarage built in Charles Street. He initiated Christmas dinners for the poor of St John's parish, which have been maintained ever since. He also established soup kitchens for the poor and needy of his parish. On leaving Cardiff, the members of St John's Church and the inhabitants of the town presented him with a complimentary address and a purse of gold containing nearly £1,000, and the ladies of the congregation subscribed £100 for a testimonial to Mrs Howell.

In 1875 he became Vicar of Wrexham in the diocese of St Asaph, then in the gift of Bishop Hughes. He was appointed Rural Dean of Wrexham, a dignity which he enjoyed for ten years. He was made Examining Chaplain to the Bishop, and given the prebendal stall of Meliden and a canonry in the Cathedral.

In 1877 the late Archbishop Tait of Canterbury conferred upon him the honorary degree of B.D., in recognition of his great and manifold services to the Church in Wales, and his very extensive knowledge of the peculiar characteristics of the Welsh people. In 1889 he was appointed Archdeacon of Wrexham. When he took up his work at Wrexham in 1875 there were three churches and two mission rooms at Wrexham. There were five clergy with nine services, five celebrations during the month, one hundred and twenty-eight Easter communicants, and six Sunday Schools. At Easter, 1891, there were nine churches and five mission rooms. The clergy were ten,

with twenty-one Sunday services. There were twenty-two celebrations during the month, eight hundred and thirty-five Easter communicants, out of a total of one thousand two hundred and fifty-nine, and fourteen Sunday Schools. During his residence at Wrexham he was often called upon to take part in the anniversaries of the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Church of England Temperance Society, the Church Pastoral Aid Society, and other bodies, at Exeter Hall. During the sixteen years he was at Wrexham he collected the sum of £40,000 for the Church services. In 1891 he became Vicar of Gresford, a living which he held until 1897, when Lord Salisbury appointed him to the Deanery of St David's, in succession to the late Dean Phillips. Mrs Howell was buried at Gresford. He was the means of restoring the Lady Chapel at the Cathedral of St David's, one of the many monuments to his industry, his affection for the Church, and his exceptional influence among the people. Hitherto Welsh deaneries had chiefly been occupied by Englishmen or Anglicised Welshmen, who did not understand the needs of the people. Dean Howell initiated a movement to set up a memorial in the Cathedral to the Welsh doctors and nurses who died in the South African war. The memorial was unveiled by Lord Penrhyn. It was noticed at this time that his health was failing, and that he was obliged to take his carriage when making calls. He broke down twice in his life, and undoubtedly these breakdowns were due to his excessive devotion to the duties of his position at Cardiff and Wrexham. He died at the age of seventy-two after a very brief illness, lasting only a few days, at 5 o'clock Thursday evening, 15th January 1903. His last words were, "It is all right." He preached the previous Sunday at St David's Cathedral. The Privy Council granted permission for the interment to take place in one of the Eastern chapels attached to the Cathedral, the Chapel of

St Nicholas. The remains were conveyed from the Deanery, and were allowed to remain overnight in the Lady Chapel. A service for the family was held on Wednesday night in the Lady Chapel at the Cathedral, and on Thursday morning several members of the family attended Holy Communion, administered by Canon Camber Williams. The funeral took place on Thursday, 21st January 1903. There was also a memorial service in the nave the same evening at 7 o'clock, at which the sermon was preached by Chancellor Smith, who succeeded him as Dean. Expressions of sympathy and condolence reached the family from all parts of North and South Wales, and also from England, and abroad. The committal sentences of the burial service were pronounced by Bishop Lloyd and the Bishop of the Diocese. He was the first Dean ever buried in the precincts of the Cathedral. Interments had been previously made in the Chapel of St Nicholas—one of a priest of the Wogan family, and the other of Sir John Wogan, a Pembrokeshire knight, who saw service with the Crusaders. There had only been four Deans of St David's, the first to have the title conferred upon him being Dean Llewelyn in the forties. There were left to mourn his loss, four sons and three daughters. The Rev. J. A. Howell, M.A., Vicar of St Bede's, Toxteth Park, Liverpool; Tudor Howell, Esq., barrister-at-law; Mrs Prothero, wife of Archdeacon Prothero of Aberystwyth; Dorothy, who married a nephew of the Rev. H. Arnold Thomas, M.A., of Bristol, and who was on her way to India to join her husband when the Dean died; also Captain Howell, Leight, Kent; and a brother, Ald. W. Howell, Pencoed. As a last token of respect to the late Dean Howell, eight members of the Llandaff Diocesan Association of Change Ringers met at St John's Church, Cardiff, on Tuesday, 20th January 1903, and rang a peal of grandsire triples, with the bells muffled. This was the first muffled peal ever rung in Cardiff, and

probably the first ever rung in Wales. After the funeral a representative meeting was held at St David's, at which it was decided to start a movement for the establishment of a National Memorial in honour of the late Dean, and it was also decided that the memorial should take the form of the restoration of St Nicholas Chapel, where the remains of the Dean lie, and the foundation of theological scholarships. Dean Howell bequeathed his valuable copy of Wm. Salesbury's version of the New Testament to the Cardiff Free Library. In the same institution are also his farewell discourse on leaving Cardiff in 1875, and a sermon preached by him in 1856, while curate at Neath, urging a mutual forbearance in matters of belief. There is also available a privately printed Prayer Book, compiled for the use of Lady Llanover, by Dean Howell, Canon Silvan Evans, and the late Dr Saunders, Calvinistic Methodist minister of Swansea. He had the distinction of holding office in the four Dioceses—he was Curate of Neath and Vicar of Cardiff, in Llandaff; Vicar of Pwllheli, in Bangor; Vicar of Wrexham and Gresford, Canon and Archdeacon, in St Asaph, and Dean of St David's. One of his last public acts was to send to every magazine in the country a letter setting forth the need of a spiritual revival in Wales, entitled "Prif Angen Cymru." He wrote much in connection with the Welsh Church Press. Some of his best things appeared in the columns of *Y Cyfaill Eglwysig*. He believed in the possibility of a corporate reunion of the Welsh people, and for this he laboured and prayed. It is a notable fact that the last production from his pen appeared the very month of his death in the columns of *Y Cyfaill Eglwysig*. It was a prayer for a great outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the Church in Wales. He showed literary ability at a very early age in life. At the age of sixteen, in the year 1847, he won a prize for an essay on "The Advantages to Welshmen of learning the English language." In that essay he advocated the

teaching of English through the medium of the Welsh, a method which has since found favour with educational experts. In 1854, at the first eisteddfod held at Bridgend, it transpired that he was the author of the first and second best Welsh odes on "The Opening of the South Wales Railway," and to him were both prizes awarded. His lecture on Welsh hymnology was delivered in many parts of the country. He wrote and translated many hymns. Two of his hymns appear in the new collection of the Calvinistic Methodists.

AN ANALYSIS

Among the gifted and cultivated men of the Victorian Era in Wales who sought to discipline the taste, direct the culture, and elevate the imagination of their countrymen, and to impart a higher and more patriotic tone to all national movements, Dean Howell ranks among the foremost. From the beginning of his public career down to the very time of his death, he gave the people the results of his wise judgment and ripe observation, and that, not in the interest of any particular creed, class, or party, but in the interest of the nation at large. Wales recognised in him a man who was conscious of his mission, understood its meaning, and was bent on its fulfilment. True, he is regarded by some as an over-rated man, but much depends upon the view-point. He never had any pretensions to scholarship. His personality was more of a charm than of an instruction. He cared nothing for the science of politics. Unlike his countrymen, he had strong faith in the British Constitution, and in the English people as administrators. But pure politics never appealed to him, though as a father he naturally felt proud when his son, Mr Tudor Howell, was elected Conservative Member for the Denbigh Boroughs. Dean Howell was not a controversialist. Looked at as a mere ecclesiastic,

he would be probably a disappointment; yet he was a sound Churchman, and to many a great ecclesiastical statesman. Whether he dealt with questions of practical life or of sacred casuistry, it was done with discrimination. He was a patriot, but it was patriotism without extravagance. He was a distinguished evangelical preacher, and fulfilled the national ideal to an exceptional degree. He was at his best when face to face with the people of Wales, and a nation never loved a man more than they loved him. Of all Welsh leaders, no one was so little seen engaged in the strife of tongues. We do not remember a single instance when there was an expression of national dissatisfaction with him. The Welshman's dagger was never in his hand, nor the Welshman's malice above his head. The tears that fell on his grave were neither Nonconformist nor Episcopalian: they were national tears. He was an orator of that great school which is slowly passing away—rugged in form of thought and expression, daring in imagination, inspiring in strength, and constraining in sincerity. Emerson said that a man passes for what he is worth. No, not always. There have been many who have suffered in their reputations, but who have been put right by later investigations. For a period of fifty years Browning was a by-word in England. He was misunderstood and misinterpreted. It was in spite of society that he finally took his rightful place among the princes of literature. *Vox populi* is not always *Vox Dei*, and even the critics are not always actuated by the best of motives. Dean Howell was undoubtedly a good man, a man who had touched the reality of prayer, a man always honest with himself, but he was not beyond the tongue of slander. It has been asked whether he would have been made a bishop had he lived long enough. Well, he had lived long enough, for he was seventy-two years old when he died. The

bishopric of Bangor was once within his grasp, but an anonymous communication to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners robbed him of that honour. It is not necessary for the purpose of this analysis to name the author of that communication. It is sufficient to mention the broad fact.

It is laid to his charge that he did not do his duty by the Welsh Church. But, is there any one that has? Is there any one that does? Dean Howell did the work for which he felt he was best fitted; and notwithstanding such criticism, it may be safely stated that but few men of his, or any other age, received such general admiration.

A man may be a genius and yet devoid of those equipments which enable lesser men to attain greater success and eminence. Dean Howell, or "Llawdden," as he was familiarly called, gave unequivocal manifestations of genius, but it was not cast in the same mould as that of Dr Lewis Edwards—not so massive, original, or creative. Neither did it belong to the same class as that of Kilsby Jones—not so daring, erratic, or overwhelming in its effect. It had none of the unregulated passionateness which characterised our hero of Garth Madryn. The two men had little in common except fame. Dean Howell's genius was domestic, but not devoid of romance, of enthusiasm, or of public spirit. Its chief features were love of fatherland and of family, of nature and of kin, of song and of poetry, of liberty and of religion. His discourses, addresses, and productions were not so remarkable for originality and profundity as they were for beauty, naturalness, grace, and elevation. He was a tender-hearted, sensitive man, and highly sensitive natures are apt to be irresolute, but he had in him the pith and sinew of a hero. A man of strong conviction, plain-spoken, yet without undue severity, and never provoking strife or lowering his tone as a Christian minister. It

was said of Coleridge that he possessed every sense except common sense, and every faculty save the faculty of shrewdness. But Dean Howell possessed both. He was well-balanced: he perfectly understood the national temperament, and had learnt the art of living. There was a charity and a sweet insistence about him which are more eloquent than eloquence itself. When he spoke on any question, whether of local or national import, he made us feel his entire remoteness from all sordid aims and debasing passions. He was one of the best representatives of that courtly golden life or bearing which is fast passing away from our midst. There was in him that old sweet disposition of less cultivated times. His sentiments, his language, his addresses, his illustrations, were not only full of thoughtfulness, but indicated a fine, tender, and lofty mind. Indeed, the whole attitude of the man was one of true refinement, and he had the gift of adjusting himself to his environments. A man of burning earnestness—an earnestness never surpassed—yet never offensive, it was inevitable that he should become a recognised leader in the best intellectual circles of his time. We say of him, as it was said of Frederick W. Robertson, of Brighton, "O that a hundred like him were given us by God, and placed in prominent stations in Church and State throughout the land."

What, therefore, were the main features in the personality and life of Dean Howell? What was the secret of his power and popularity?

We notice first *the catholicity of his spirit.* He was singularly fair-minded, and always willing to hear the reason from the other side. His circle of friends was as comprehensive as his character, and though he loved his Church much, he loved his nation more. And no Churchman of his day had such influence over Nonconformist opinion. He formed intimate friendships with the foremost Nonconformist men of his generation. Such friendships

sprang indeed more out of literary and patriotic comradeship than ecclesiastical or spiritual fellowship. This did not make him any the less a Churchman, as some of his brethren imagined, but it made him a better Churchman. He was charged in his lifetime with disloyalty to his oath of office, and the charge is still being circulated. It is based upon the fraternal element in his character, and it is really a reflection both of, and upon, the attitude of the official section of the Establishment towards Welsh nationalism. Dean Howell knew that he lived in days of peril for the Church, and as a faithful and loyal son he sought to make it, in fact, all that it was in its highest ideal. In the prosecution of that ideal he held certain views as to his own duties and responsibilities. This meant sacrifice, but the way of genius is ever the way of renunciation, and Dean Howell was content to do the work for which he felt himself best fitted, and to calmly endure whatever degree of martyrdom there was in it, and in this we have the supreme evidence of his sincerity. It is a severe trial of one's manhood to be publicly true to one's convictions in the face of adverse social and ecclesiastical influences. Men, as a rule, are more anxious about their influence than about their sentiments. They prefer to sacrifice the latter for the sake of the former. But such influence is the most worthless of all influences. It is a false shadow. It is said of Novalis that his genius was but little understood in his lifetime. His own father only heard of his son's poems to oppose them, and never took the trouble to read what he had written. But after the death of his son he happened to attend divine service with the Hernhutt community. He was deeply affected by the rare beauty of a spiritual song which was sung by the worshippers. At the close of the service, with deep emotion, he asked a friend the name of the fine hymn which he had heard, and who was the author of it. "What!" was the astonished

answer, "Do you not know that it was written by your son?" This is a fair illustration of the relation which existed between Dean Howell and his Mother Church. But it is safe to say that if his critics were impelled by the spirit which actuated Dean Howell, the cry of disestablishment in Wales would lose half its force. His contention was that the Church must be to every age as it comes, and he knew what was lying in the womb of the future. The power and usefulness of the Church, he thought, depended more on social and spiritual conformity than upon hereditary connection. His ideal church was the Church of Progressive Humanity, the Church of an onward-leading Divine Spirit. With regard to his attitude towards the Disestablishment question, we will allow the Dean to speak for himself. The two following quotations must be taken together. The one without the other would give an altogether erroneous view of the Dean's mind on this vexed question. In his sermon at St Margaret's, Westminster, in 1890, he said:—

"There was the unquestionable fact that the majority of the people were not found within the pale of the Church. There was the equally unquestionable fact that her adherents were largely made up of English settlers and Anglicised Welshmen—not of the Welsh-speaking masses who hold the future of the Principality in their hands. But above all other causes was the weakness of the Church in Wales due to the fact that so much of the best blood of the nation no longer ran in her veins. It was sheer folly to hide from themselves the truth that the most vigorous life of the Welsh people no longer welled forth from the heart of the Welsh Church."

And in a sermon preached a few years later at Manchester, he said:—

"As to the ultimate future of the Church in the Principality, faith in God forbids even the least misgiving.

The strength of the Church lies in the truth of God enshrined within her. The wealth of the Church lies in the faith, zeal, and love of her children. The safety of the Church lies in her loyalty to her mission and in the indwelling presence and power of God the Holy Ghost. Man can only take away what man has given. Her advantages are great and manifold. She covers the entire Principality as nothing else does. She has, and will have, an incomparable parochial system. Let her be the friend of all, the enemy of none, no respecter of persons, no partisan, either in social or political affairs, and ever in sympathy with all right aspirations. Let her be presented in this spirit, and I am sure there are not a few Nonconformists who will wish her 'God speed!' even though from early associations, traditions, and convictions, they must not enter her courts."

The Right Rev. Lord Bishop of Llandaff, in his brief but valuable contribution, says that his father, the late Bishop Hughes of St Asaph — one of the foremost preachers among the clergy of his day—always cultivated friendly relations with the various Nonconformist bodies. Bishop Hughes often remarked that if the Old Church of the country had been true to herself and her ideals, those divisions need never, and probably would never, have happened. Though a man of strong convictions, he was tolerant and broad-minded in his attitude towards all, even those from whose opinion he entirely differed, and whose conclusions he most deplored. It would be impossible to overestimate the value of such an attitude to the Mother-Church herself, as well as to the people. This is exactly where Dean Howell stood.

Unquestionably he loved his Church. Its antiquity, its liturgy, its traditions, and its historical associations, appealed strongly to both his heart and his imagination. He believed in the adaptability and superiority of its parochial system. He deplored the indifference of the people towards the Prayer Book, but he blamed the clergy

for it. It was the result, he thought of poor and slovenly reading. Yes, he believed in his Church; still he had a great leaning towards the great evangelical preachers of Nonconformity. He fully appreciated the place of Nonconformity in the making of Welsh national life.

In formally and whole-heartedly identifying himself with the Church, he took with him a thorough knowledge of Nonconformity, and especially of the pioneers of the Welsh Methodist revival, which in the closing years of the eighteenth century rescued the Principality from sin. His regard for Methodism never failed. The traditions of that noble denomination appealed to him. The great need of the Church, he said, was to engage in parochial work in a conciliatory disposition, making no distinction between Conformists and Nonconformists. He endeavoured to unite breadth and depth of conviction. He did not like the word "toleration," because it implied superiority and condescension. He said that the older he grew the more he longed to be at peace with all men. When asked why, he said, "There is no special secret to disclose: I have always urged that the Church's attitude towards Dissent and Dissenters should be one of friendliness, consideration, courtesy, and sympathy—not, of course, with their position as Dissenters from the Church, or with the opinions with which they differ from the Church, but with their general efforts to arrest the progress of irreligion, and to promote the moral, social, and intellectual welfare of the community. We should not shrink from criticising when the interest of truth demands it, but it should be done in a distinctly Christian spirit, and with the consciousness of our own faults and failings. In our attitude towards Dissent we should never lose sight of these facts:—First, its origin was largely due to the neglect, apathy, and wordliness of the Church. Secondly, the Church, even to-day, is inadequately equipped to meet the needs of the population." It was natural that a man with such an ideal and such a mission

in life should have an attentive hearing. In fact, he often preached to two congregations at a time, the one inside the Church and the other outside. An Englishman, who attended a meeting of Foresters at Cardiff during Dean Howell's incumbency, happening to be passing St John's Square a little after 6 o'clock, saw scores of people struggling in vain to gain admission. He looked on in amazement, and then hurried back to his friends with the story, "I have seen in Cardiff what I have never seen elsewhere—a church too small for the congregation."

The following is an illustration of the breadth of his sympathy. One very stormy night a friend of his met him tearing along through the wind and rain. The friend stopped him, and asked him where he was going on such a night. Pointing to a house in the neigbourhood the Dean said, "I am going to see a navvy who lives in that house, and who is dying." "But you are risking too much," said the friend, "to be out on such a night as this." "Oh, I am strong enough," he replied, "no storm would stop me when there is a soul to be saved."

When, early in 1875, the rumour got abroad that the Dean was about to leave Cardiff, some Irish girls who worked in one of the potato stores down at the docks decided among themselves to make a presentation. They did not have much to spare. Their hearts were bigger than their pockets; but they subscribed enough money between them for a piece of silver plate. I believe it was a silver salver. They formed themselves into a sort of deputation, and appointed one of their own number to act as spokeswoman. They presented themselves one evening at the vicarage. The vicar was called to the door, and the woman who was to speak suddenly found that, for the first time, words failed her. "Good gracious," said Vicar Howell, "what is the meaning of this?" The would-be spokeswoman placed her hand beneath her apron and produced the silver salver. With tears in her eyes she

handed it to the good man. Not a word was spoken, and for the next minute or two, vicar and potato girls were weeping together. Power of speech returned eventually, and the scene that followed was one of the most touching that can be imagined.

Another great source of his strength was *his evangelicalism.* If we are asked to what school of thought he belonged, we must classify him as a man of broad and evangelical views. He believed in the Church Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but not in the doctrine of the real presence. He was as far away from Rome or Geneva as the most extreme Nonconformist Welsh divine. He knew for what the Protestant reformers had shed their blood. He had little sympathy with the Oxford Movement. With this movement ritualism came in with a rush. Its appeal to the senses by music, by vestment, by incense, fairly conquered the English section of the Establishment, and it took hold of a section of the Welsh Church. But worse than the ritualism was the sacerdotal aspect of it, which sought to destroy the pastoral conception of the ministry. By the Act of Uniformity of 1559, the limits of the Church to decree its own rites and ceremonies were already and definitely defined. But the High Church party contended that its application was limited to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The contention, of course, had no foundation in fact, but it showed the desperate character of the movement to unprotestantise the English Church. Dean Howell had been bred in evangelical associations, and he had no sympathy with the priestly conception of the ministry. Yet, he saw that the Oxford Movement was not without its charm and seduction for refined and even spiritual natures. He also saw that the sacerdotal conception was fast becoming a leading idea of the Church's life, and was in danger of becoming its master-spirit. Side by side with the progress of the Oxford Movement there was the decay of evangelicalism in the Church. Indeed, at the

close of the Victorian Era, England had no great evangelical scholars or thinkers. She really had no great intellectual leaders either in the field of science, of poetry, of literature, of philosophy, or of romance. Her only claim to greatness was in the field of statesmanship and religion. In addition to this, there was also a distinct lowering of moral tone. Moreover, the English people showed that, notwithstanding the temporary influence of the Cromwellian period, they had instinctively retained that love of ritualism which they had obtained from the Middle Ages. Then there was the reaction from the lack of reverence, and especially the lack of reverence which characterised the Nonconformist section of the community. Not only Faber, but thousands of minds, reverent, cultured, philosophical, God-fearing, and Christ-loving, began to revolt against the dreadful facility of turning to God, indicated by that which they were pleased to call the "base theology" of the Evangelical School. As we have noted elsewhere, the ritualistic and sacerdotal movement as expressed in the Oxford Movement took hold of a strong section of the Welsh Church. In some directions its influence was good: it restored the love of the beautiful; it regenerated the romantic spirit; it invested the services of the Church with greater dignity; but the movement carried its leaders farther than they anticipated, and farther than was desirable in the interest of the Mother-Church herself.

During this critical period Dean Howell, Rector Griffiths of Merthyr, Archdeacon Griffiths of Neath, and others, faithfully and resolutely maintained the evangelical aspect of the Church's faith. It was in Dean Howell's opinion the only permanent foothold for a true religious life. Not that Dean Howell can be said to belong to the narrow class of the earlier Evangelical and Calvinistic schools. He was a broad-minded and progressive man, though he had positive and definite religious beliefs. He

was a man of lofty devotion, and history will record that he did as much as any man of his generation for the maintenance of evangelical religion in the Established Church at that period. He was indeed a brave and an honest spirit. He owed nothing to patronage. What distinction he won, he won by pure capacity. His fame is not the result of the labours of unselfish friends, but is founded upon solid permanent work done for his Church and his nation. His star burns to-day with an enduring fame. He has come into Welsh life, thought, love, gratitude, and literature, to stay.

The next feature to which we shall refer to is his *patriotism*. It was manifested in his love of the language, the preservation of which he thought was essential to the preservation of the nation as such. He stood for the rights of the Welsh language in Church circles, and he pleaded for its restoration to its proper place in the old Cathedral of St David's. The language to him was the expression of the nation's inner life. Not only did he love the language, but everything relating to the life of the people, the old Welsh preachers, and the hymns of the revival periods. He regretted that the authorities of the Church in Wales had paid so little regard to Welsh sentiment and tradition, and he sought to direct the minds of the Church into the national mould. He was really a Welsh nationalist, not in a political sense, for he abhorred the name of politics, and he had no sympathy with agitators who sought only for notoriety. He was a nationalist in a social and ethical sense. He took thoroughly optimistic views of the future of Wales. Welshmen, he thought, had singular aptitude for mental work ; and with proper technical and literary training could give a proper account of themselves. His mind was essentially Celtic both in its defects and in its excellencies. Another evidence of his patriotism was his love for the eisteddfod as a national institution. The

Welsh pulpit has of late years been gradually withdrawing from the eisteddfod ; and it must be conceded that there is some justification in their action. It has undergone a process of deterioration, and has drifted away from the fundamental ideas of its originators. It is either losing or changing its mission. Dean Howell, however, was a great believer in the eisteddfod, and he was always sure of a sympathetic hearing at its meetings. As conductor he was unrivalled, and he could sway vast audiences at his will. I had the privilege of hearing him at the Wrexham Eisteddfod in 1888 ; and without doubt it was the greatest Welsh oratorical effort ever heard. Physically, he bore a striking resemblance to Daniel Rowland of Llangeitho, and also to Joseph Parker, and his very appearance commanded attention and respect. He commenced his address in English, but as he warmed up he seemed to feel the restraints of the Saxon tongue, and he broke forth into Welsh. Not that he had any difficulty in expressing himself, for his mastery of the English language was perfect and complete, but his soul seemed to take higher flights than the Saxon tongue could follow ; and it was evident, from the excited state of the audience, that he had touched an ancient, sacred, and tender chord. After a while, he turned again to English, but only for a brief period, for he returned into the higher region of Welsh sentiment. He spoke of the antiquity of the language, and referred in pathetic tones to its anticipated death. He eulogised the religious character, the industry, and disposition of the people. He did not believe the language would die. On the contrary, he expressed his belief that when the Judge of all the earth appeared on the white clouds in the last day, some Welshmen would greet Him with Ieuan Glan Geirionnydd's Welsh version of the old English hymn :—

"Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
Once for favour'd sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumphs of his train:
Hallelujah!
God appears on earth to reign!"

"Wele'n dyfod ar y cwmwl
'Rhwn fu farw ar y pren:
Myrdd myrddiynnau o angylion
Sy'n amgylchu'i orsedd wen!
Haleluwia!
Iesu a deyrnasa byth."

Although these words were uttered in the vernacular, there were hundreds of Englishmen labouring under a deep emotion. Though they could not understand, they were brought under the spell of the orator, and the scene altogether was indeed a memorable one.

In addition to this there was above all his great gift as *preacher*. The Mother-Church in Wales had neglected preaching, and for many years relied upon her parochial system and scholastic attainments for her influence. Genius did not count, neither did a knowledge of Welsh. Important livings were given, not to the men who understood the people, and who longed for their redemption, but to English-speaking men and Anglicised Welshmen; and it was in this manner that the Church lost her grip of the nation. And if Welsh history has any significance at all, it clearly shows to the present ecclesiastical authorities in Wales that their only hope of regaining the affection of the people is to adopt a policy which is in line with the language and needs of the nation. In this, Dean Howell led the way. He suffered, but he knew how to suffer. He restored the gift of preaching to the Church; and as a preacher he became famous throughout the length and breadth of the land. He spoke as a man who had tasted and

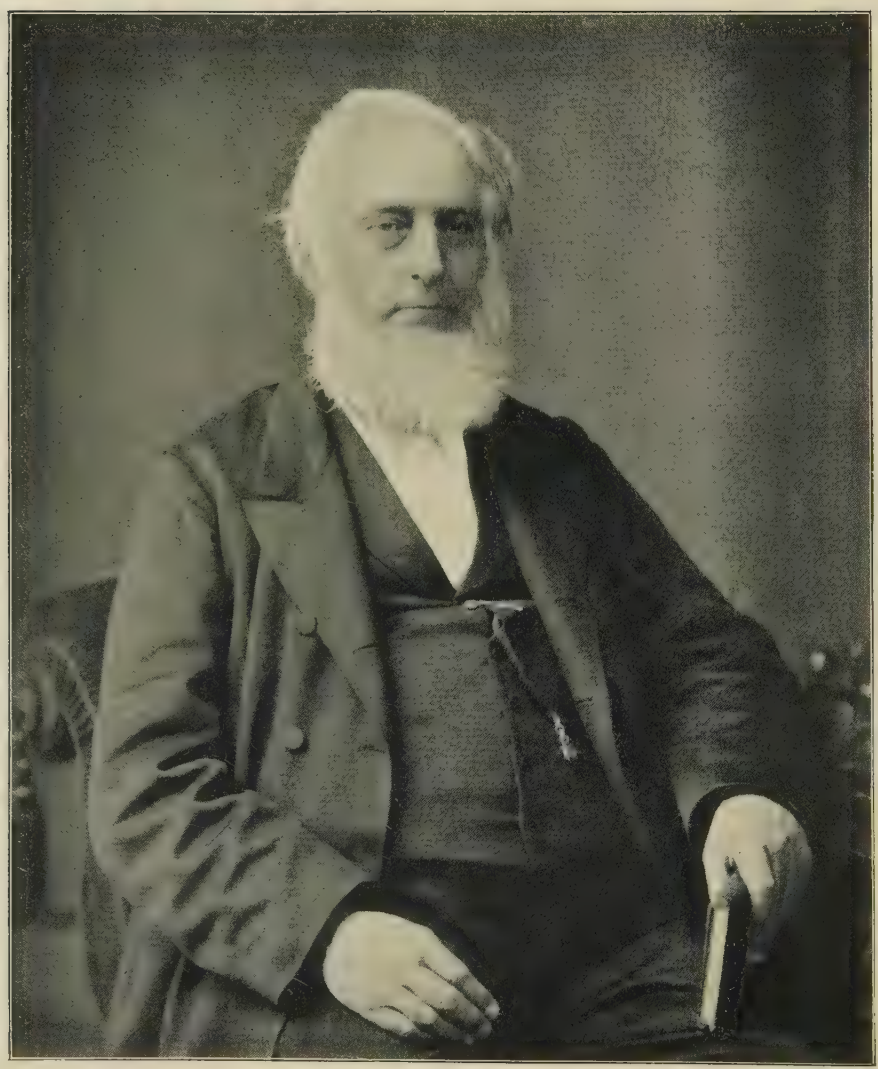
handled the Word of Life. He broke away from the commonplaces of the Church pulpit; he was distinctive, practical, and highly spiritual. He was characterised by depth of thought, intensity of feeling, and universal sympathy. He was luminous with the light of true genius. As an indication of the trend of his theology, it is sufficient to note that his favourite authors were Hooker, Baxter, Matthew Henry, Pearson, and Archbishop Leighton. And his policy was to keep within the bounds of the theology which the Church had inherited. He was essentially a Puritan.

When asked what men and books had specially influenced him, he replied that his own father and Archdeacon Griffiths of Neath were the two that stood out conspicuously in his memory. "As to books," he continued, "next to the Book of books, I have been influenced in theology by St Augustine among the ancients, and by J. B. Mozley among the moderns; but above all by Bishop Pearson on the creed, which many years ago I digested more thoroughly than any book of the kind, and it has been the backbone of my theology ever since. Devotionally, the works of Bishop Huntington and the writings of the late Rev. George Bowen of Bombay have been helpful. In fiction, Charles Reade and George Eliot are my favourites; in English poetry, Tennyson and Whittier; in Welsh, Islwyn, Alun, and Dafydd ap Gwilym." The following quotation from his farewell discourse delivered at St John's, Cardiff, 13th April 1875, will give the reader an insight into his spirit and personality. It sets him forth as a simple, brave, and sympathetic man, full of real power, and whose great heart sorrowed and agonised for those he was about to leave:—

"Few things," he said, "in this world are more deeply solemn and affecting than the act of separation between a Christian minister and the souls committed to his charge, when for the last time the long familiar voice sounds in

their ears, and for the last time they are met together as pastor and people ere they meet in judgment at the bar of Almighty God. Deeply engraven on my heart and memory will ever be the recognition of your unbounded kindness. Forgive, I beseech you, my mistakes and imperfections. Forgive, I beseech you, my shortcomings and deficiencies; and if I may still add to the multitude of my obligations, it is to entreat a warm interest in your prayers for me and my work in the distant parish where my future is cast. Sustained as I have been by your prayers hitherto, I am deeply anxious to secure the same blessings elsewhere. Farewell, then, my aged brethren, whose work on earth is nearly done, and may God by His grace ripen you for glory. Farewell, ye middle-aged, ye pillars of society, bravely bearing the burden of the day. And to you, my younger brethren, you young people of this congregation, to you it is hardest of all to say farewell—you, so trustful, so confiding, so inexperienced, surrounded by so many snares, beset by so many temptations—oh, my soul yearns for your spiritual welfare. Oh, may God by His grace shield you from evil, may He strengthen you for self-conquest, may He sanctify you in your bodies and souls, and at last receive you into His everlasting Kingdom, for Jesus Christ's sake."

With these words I take leave of this great Apostle of corporate re-union, who prayed and struggled for a wider mercy and larger freedom in the life of the Church of which he was such a distinguished ornament.



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Thos Thomas

The Rev. THOMAS THOMAS, D.D., First President of the Baptist College, Pontypool

By T. H. THOMAS, R.C.A. (Arlunydd Penygarn)

The intention of the notices in this work being critical or appreciative of the work and character of the leaders of religious thought and action in Wales, it would seem necessary that the writers should not be closely connected with, or related to, the men of whom they treat. A certain remoteness seems proper for the due action of faculties which should work in the historical and analytic sense requisite. The writer feels this need both on account of his relationship and on account of certain dominant qualities in the subject of the notice: these were universal benevolence and affections as wide, the remembrance of which, warmest in the domestic circle, raises to the eyes a haze, sun-lit indeed, of loving memory through which, it may be, the man becomes transfigured.

Portions of this notice should be read "between the lines," in spite of the writer's attempts at accurate analysis. Yet, it is hoped that discount need not often be taken, as the subject of the notice may at least be claimed to have been in character remarkably equally developed and singularly steadfast and direct in the evolution of his ethical and practical career. Principles and practice were fixed at a time of almost precocious maturity. Both were good, so that enormous development was possible without any fluctuation in the upward

way, in spite of stress of emotion or thought, or the vicissitudes of worldly fortune.

The dates of the chief events of the life are as follows: Birth at Cowbridge, 12th January 1805. Baptism as a believer and by immersion in the River Taff, 22nd November 1818. Commencement of preaching in the same year. First sermon in public, 12th April 1821. Entry as student at the Baptist College, Abergavenny, 1st September 1822. Proceeded to Stepney Baptist College, 25th August 1824. Began the ministry at Henrietta Street, Brunswick Square, London, June 1828. Married Mary David at St John's Church, Cardiff, 22nd February 1830. Became principal and tutor of the Baptist College, Pontypool, 1836. Resigned that position at Christmas 1876, and retired to residence in Cardiff, June 1877. Died at Cardiff, 7th December 1881.

It will be seen that these dates cover a period during which the keenest struggles for liberty of conscience and equality in the rights of religion and citizenship which marked the nineteenth century, took place.

In 1805 and onwards, the conditions of the populace in Wales, as in England, were deplorable. The Corn Laws created semi-starvation; combinations of workers were illegal, so that riot was the only alternative. No effective police force existed, so that any serious tumult was suppressed instantly by military force. Heavy fines, long imprisonment in fœtid prisons, and transportation to distant regions in ships, the state of which was often indescribable, were the lot of ringleaders.

The county of Glamorgan shared, of course, in the general lot, and suffered some special reactions, chiefly caused by its extended seaboard, with its wall of cliffs pierced by inlets which had given a wild character to the inhabitants of the "Bro" or "Vale" in days of smuggling and darker deeds, tales of which were rife. In the upper part of the county—"the Hills"—large developments of

the iron and coal resources of the country were in process, bringing with them the aggregation of masses of men, women, and children, living under conditions of housing upon which even those which obtain at present in our valleys are vast improvements. As to feeding these masses, the "Truck-shop" was instituted, which had an air of paternal benevolence, inasmuch as it was arranged by the employer to ease the difficulties of the workman in obtaining good food in days of slow transit. Such forms of benevolence have ever ended in the enrichment of the employer and the impoverishment of the workman, in spite of the honesty, and even generosity, which marked some of the masters. As a rule, the food was inferior in quality and high in price. In the works and pits women and children were employed. The state of the mines and coal-pits was dangerous; inspection was naught. Minor and fatal accidents were of daily occurrence, and an old collier of the old style was a man whose body was seamed with blue cicatrices, and who went about haltingly upon injured limbs.

The conditions described, with others too numerous to note here, left the people in a welter of mutinous dissatisfaction, which was in course of penetration by two great influences—Puritan Dissent and Free Thought.

The Church of England at that time had great physical power but little moral influence—an amazing condition of things. No position of place or power was open to any but adherents of that Church which enveloped the life of every one. No child could have a legal name but through the adspersion of one of its priests, and its consequent registration; no legal marriage could take place but within the portals of the Church; no proper burial could take place except in its churchyards. Citizenship absolutely depended upon its favour in one form or another. The churches of Glamorgan were for the most part little attended for their religious services, though

crowds often met on Sundays about them for the sociality of the gatherings there; as edifices the churches were mostly ill-kept and desolate; the cathedral of the diocese was in great part a ruin. The clergy were apathetic, though many were kind and companionable in their parishes, and a few were burning and shining lights endeavouring to warm and enlighten. Their efforts met with discouragement from their superiors, though their flocks were responsive.

Such being, broadly speaking, the condition of the Church of England in Glamorgan as regards the middle and working classes, it is not difficult to understand the results. In the welter of discontent above described there were many ardent spirits which were unfitted by temperament to fall into the rude life about them—men touched with the divine enthusiasm to lift themselves and their neighbours into a purer air than wrapped almost all around—out of the grovelling life of labour unrelieved except by the release of mutinous passions and more or less boorish revelry—into the realm of thought and religion. Some, and these chiefly in the industrial region, learned and assimilated the ideas of humanity, of liberty, equality, and fraternity, of which the Revolution in France was at once the apotheosis and the blasphemy.

But others, and the great mass of the population who were seeking, often blindly, yet earnestly, for the good and the true, found it in a new approach to, and a re-statement of, the old divine truth of the frailty of man, his innate belief of his own need for forgiveness and a new picturing of the pure Christ Jesus standing ready with open arms to welcome them repentant into a world, not only of great and holy ideals, but into a region of emotion intense enough to safeguard them against the lower passions of the seething world around them. Among these there were two classes: those who by temperament were grave, thoughtful, capable of leading and organising;

others less capable in such directions, but who were instant, alert, enthusiastic, and who threw themselves upon the steps of the altar with strong crying and tears in revival fervour. All were stimulated and sustained by the voices of the great preachers of the time, who went up and down the country proclaiming, some with sternness, others with tenderness, the new evangel. Of these some of the greatest were priests of the Church of England, who "taking their courage in both hands" were divinely impelled to break with the methods of their sect, others were sons of the old puritans ; doctrines differed, but all agreed in the one central Christian truth.

Into these conditions was born the boy Thomas Thomas, son of Thomas and Mary Thomas. He was born at Cowbridge, nearly opposite the present Railway Station, in a house now destroyed called the "White Hart," on 12th January 1805. The parents were leaving the house almost immediately, having taken a small farm at Leckwith Bridge, near Cardiff.

The first definite picture in his life is presented upon the journey to Leckwith, as the child was brought from Cowbridge wrapped in the usual Glamorgan fashion in a shawl to his mother's breast, she riding upon a grey mare, about the saddle of which various small articles of farmhouse use were tied. Of this mother, so simply affectionate with her nursling, but small traces remain. She was amiable and loving, her life filled with many cares as many children were born to her, and much workclaimed her time.

Thomas Thomas, senior, was a strong man, of masterful temper, breaking into storm not unfrequently, yet withal possessing many generous traits of character, and it may be suspected that the mildness of the wife often quelled the heat of the husband. Most of the father's physical character descended to the son ; in feature there was a

singular likeness, but it would seem that while the father stamped the lineaments, the mother filled their expression with her love.

The life at Leckwith Farm was that usual to agriculture, and the boy grew up inured to the life, so far as was outwardly seen. The only marked incident as having an effect on after life was that when about seven years of age he went with his father to help in catching a skittish mare, which leaped over him, splitting his ear with a touch of her hoof. This probably led to his early loss of hearing with that ear, and gradual injury to the other.

At from eight to nine education commenced at school, though the boy had already learned to read both Welsh, at a Sunday School, and English: like most in "Bro Morganwg," the household was bi-lingual, a fact to which he attributed a special value. A school existed in the village-city of Llandaff, near by, over which a clergyman, the Rev. Lewis, presided, and the boy came and went, as opportunity served, for some two years. He gained solid elementary knowledge, and a clear good handwriting. Possessing a sweet boyish voice, often singing hymns, he learned musical notation so as to sing tunes at sight. This gift and knowledge was in after life most useful to him as a minister, and pleasurable as opening to him the glorious works of the masters in music. In his boyhood, singing as funeral processions wended their way to the churchyards was universal, as it is, even now, common in Wales, and the boy, then known as "Twm bach Canton" (little Tom of Canton), used often to accompany such functions.

During the whole of this early period, the boy's character was ripening for his after career. Though full of boyish spirits, and with physical strength to spare, he gave but little time to play, but was always quiet and thoughtful, and engaged with books at all spare

moments. This serious, industrious character deepened into what is described as "piety" by a younger brother. This was effected chiefly by conversations with two labourers on the farm, who were religious men, but the boy himself did not date his definite illumination or "conversion" to this period. He pondered these things in his heart and reading, with close attention to preaching, aided by a memory of great tenacity (for he could remember almost the whole of any sermon he heard), gave him a large fund for rumination.

It is with feelings akin to awe that the writer marks that much of this earnestness, this serious outlook upon life, these emotional crises, are those of a child but eleven years of age, in perfect health, with all a country boy's vigour and jocosity. Yet, such cases of early development are not uncommon in natural country life, where growth is unretarded by the necessity of conforming to a social mould, nor is depressed by a constant reference to a prevailing "form" assumed by boys themselves.

In a manuscript, read to the members of Henrietta Street Chapel, London, of which only a fragment remains. Thomas Thomas details some of his early experiences. He says, in reference to his twelfth to thirteenth year, that then a darkness, followed by a new light, seemed to be shed upon his life: things in the farm life and in the home life seemed entirely changed; what he had before enjoyed became to him sordid and squalid; even the landscape, which is on the banks of the Ely full of beauty, became gloomy. "I looked around in the meadow, and saw the patient cattle, and longed that I could be like them: this was a small meadow near the house, and on the bank of the River Ely, to which I came for quiet with my lesson-books. This state continued many days, but at last it broke up with an impulse to cast myself upon my knees in prayer. I prayed earnestly there in the meadow, and all my future course became clear to me."

Such light and clearness of vision as to his path in life necessarily led to the lad's baptism, as a conscious believer in the Gospel of Christ. He had come under the influence of holy men, who believed and taught that belief in Christ Jesus must be followed, not preceded, by the rite giving entry to His Church, and who saw reason to believe that such rite was by Scripture ordained to be observed by immersion. In a lad of quick perceptions and thoughtful disposition, the Great Choice—which is also the "Great Refusal" of evil—may be made even at so early an age as thirteen, which was the age of Thomas at this time. He was accepted for baptism, and a time was appointed for the rite to be performed in the River Taff, at a spot a little above the present Canton Bridge, where such services then took place. But there was parental opposition. The lad's father was aware of the intention, and, joining the gathering, intervened as the Rev. Griffith David was leading his son down to the water, and took him forcibly away homewards, with the remark that he "had paid before for his baptism, and he should not go through another." But on crossing to the Canton side of the river, he met his wife, who enquired whither he was taking the lad, and was sternly answered, "Taking him home." The mother took the boy's hand and said, "Come with me"—she was going to attend service at the chapel; and the father gave up his intention, and the son returned with his mother. Another arrangement was made, and a few weeks later, on 22nd November 1818, the lad was baptized without opposition. In explanation of the father's action it should be said that, though at that period making no pretension to religious feeling, he was an adherent of the Church of England, occasionally attending the Cathedral at Llandaff; underlying the eccentric act of an impulsive nature there was a certain amount of reason.

Thomas was now under the influence of a man to

whom he acknowledged a lifelong indebtedness; this was the Rev. William Jones, Baptist minister, who at that time kept a school at the old "Star and Garter" Court, Cardiff. After twelve months in the school, he was engaged by Mr Jones as usher, then leaving the farm. He attended the ministry of the Rev. Griffith David, who preached at the same place until the Tabernacle Chapel was erected by the Welsh Baptists in Cardiff, and in this chapel, on 12th April 1821, he being just over fifteen, his first sermon in public was preached in the Welsh language from the text, 1 John iv. 10, 11, a passage which presaged the whole tenor of his life: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another"—this was the key-note of the harmony of his whole life.

This public appearance was by no means his first attempt at preaching; for some two years previously the boy had endeavoured to exercise a gift he felt to be growing strong within him. In hired rooms in villages and towns, and still more often in country farm-houses, meetings were held where the people from miles around would quietly gather and worship with prayer and praise. Some of the old-style farm living-rooms thus became sanctuaries, the memory of which is not even yet lost. In some a little reading-desk was made, from which the words of the Bible in sonorous Welsh resounded often. Such a desk may be seen in the Great House at Llancaiach, and others still exist. So Thomas first attempted to lead devotions in a cottage at Llandough.

In these meetings any one having a gift could speak with the consent of the proven elders, and thus many a boy of tender years became emboldened to speak out the strugglings of the Divine Spirit within him, and their sweet boyish voices, modulated with the unconscious passion of semi-childhood, often brought a balm into the hearts of those their elders who sat with weather-

beaten faces and forms writhen with labour listening. Such a scene took place on one dark night at a farm near Leckwith, tenanted by Edward Phillips. The wind from the Severn Sea roared about the house where the little company sat. Thomas was encouraged to speak, and in the midst of the storm the child spoke words which marked him out as an Evangelist. So acceptable did these ministrations become, that many followed from place to place to hear him.

The result of his sermon in public was that application was made by the Church at the Tabernacle for his admission to the Baptist College at Abergavenny, then under the presidency of the Rev. Micah Thomas.

But there were difficulties; Thomas Thomas, senior, was still greatly opposed to his son's action; the son's small earnings as a teacher were not sufficient for due preparation in clothes and cash. Here again the mother intervened, and at last persuaded the father by feminine arts to accompany her to Cardiff to see about a suit of clothes for the student. While in the shop, as an informant writes, "the lion became a lamb, and instead of only buying one suit for him, he bought two, and started him for Abergavenny on a horse, his brother William going with him in the old country manner of 'ride and tie' to bring the horse back again." He entered Abergavenny College 1st September 1822, joining its little company of eight students.

His religious views at this time are succinctly expressed in his letter of application as follows:

"Having been called by the Church to exercise my gifts in the ministry, I ventured to set my hand to the plough, I hope truly believing those doctrines which are commonly denominated Calvinistic—a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the election of grace, the particularity of redemption, effectual calling, the final perseverance of the saints," etc.

Thomas Thomas was now nearly eighteen years of age, and in addition to his experiences, another was beginning. Among his friends were two families living near by the then mouldering walls of the tower of Cardiff Castle, those of Evan and Mary Llewelyn, and Llewelyn and Mary David. In the house of the former, next door to the "Star and Garter" room, the school-house and chapel of the young student, he was a continual visitor, making at times his home there. Of the David's house he was also free, there being some far-off connection between the families. Mr David's second daughter Mary was six months younger than Thomas, having ideas and experiences not dissimilar, with a warm, loving temperament, a beautiful form and face, the dark steadfast eyes of which met the blue eyes of the young man, kindling reciprocal interest, affection, and soon love. The same definite and purposeful character which the student had shown throughout his youth did not fail him under the waving of the "hyacinth wand of Eros." The youth had soon pledged himself, and the maiden had responded in full youthful hope and confidence of a union, far, perhaps, in the future, yet which nothing less than death could prevent. Time showed that the pair were made for each other.

Upon the student's arrival at Abergavenny he was fairly prepared, having command of two languages, though with less freedom in English than in Welsh; his general education was abreast of the time, and he added some knowledge of Latin, and more of Greek, to his store. He worked hard at his studies and preached in various places on the Sundays, among others at Pontypool, which was to be the scene of so much of his life's work. After two years he left for the Baptist College at Stepney, London, bidding farewell to his respected president with little thought that in time to come he would take his place.

The student left Abergavenny College, as later he

left that of Stepney, with the affection of all. He was a thorough student inured to hard work; he lost no moment due to study; his constitution braced by his youth in the winds of the Severn enabled him to surpass most of his fellow-students in devotion to his tasks, and his sunny temperament made him a favourite with his fellows. All augured well for his future. His views as to studentship were expressed over fifty years later in an address to his own students as follows: "As the child is said to be the father of the man, so is the student the father of the pastor. It is a matter of frequent observation that a young man's radical defects or prevailing imperfections are sure to be developed amidst the free and comparatively unrestrained intercourse of college life: and it is equally true that his characteristic excellencies will be drawn forth. The qualities unfolded in the house seldom fail to distinguish the future pastor. I speak from extensive observation."

He then exhorts the student to "leave behind you a name fragrant for moral and Christian worth, and carry along with you through a long ministerial course the affectionate regards and best wishes of fellow-students, tutors, and friends."

As he described and counselled so was it with himself.

The Baptist College of Stepney in the East of London was in the year 1824 under the care of Dr Newman and Dr Murch, men of the highest mark in the denomination. Under these leaders there was a group of young men full of ardour for their holy vocation. Into this group Thomas Thomas brought an enthusiasm equal to theirs. In one matter the young Welshman differed from the majority of his fellows: he was already engaged to marry. The president upon the new student's entry made certain leading questions upon this subject, and upon the young man's stating the fact, said in Johnsonian style, "We do not altogether approve of students' engagements, Sir, but, being

engaged, stick to her, Sir, stick to her, Sir." The kindly advice was needless, the connection was one of glowing affection upon both sides without a shadow of turning.

At Stepney a new world opened before the student's view: the college was the most important possessed by the Baptists; its officers were men of great learning and influence, and the body of students comprised many destined in the future for the highest position and who would have to stand in the forefront of the great battles of opinion which marked the nineteenth century. Thomas soon became marked for his intense enthusiasm and unremitting industry in study, and also for his eloquence as a preacher, to which his defined Welsh accent gave a character novel to the ears of Londoners. In the student-life of the college, the new man became a favourite on account of the invincible cheerfulness and sympathetic amiability which characterised him. He made many life-long friends among the students, among whom may be mentioned as perhaps foremost the caustic-tongued but tender-hearted Charles Stovel, for so many years one of the stalwarts of religious and political progress in London. Others there were from Wales who have left memories, as ministers or authors, as Titus Jenkins, Maurice Jones, and William Jones.

Four years were passed at Stepney in arduous study of Theology, Hebrew, and Classics. Preaching, which was the passion of his heart, became a beloved recreation, and into it there came a new ardour and tone with an eloquence freed from any linguistic difficulties as classical idiomatic English had been completely mastered. In fact, his style was formed: his sermons, solid in doctrine and definite in their expression, had the charm of persuasive pathos in their application; he had much, too, of the art of the orator, and was more free in gesture than was common at that time. Add to these acquirements remarkable natural gifts of person and feature, and certain apparently partial or

exaggerated descriptions of the young preacher at this time which have been preserved may probably be justified.

While learning, within certain reasonable limits, must be the basis for a prolonged pastorate in the Baptist denomination where preaching occupies so large a portion of public services, and where certain definite tenets which form a deep cleavage from all other denominations have to be defended, yet gifts more popular have a large place in determining a flock's choice of a shepherd, whose piping must be clear and mellifluous, and the invitation, most pressing and cordial, which the student received to undertake the ministry of the Baptist Church at Henrietta Street, Brunswick Square, London, was founded chiefly upon his power of preaching, his enthusiasm in the cause of Christ breaking into persuasive fraternal speech. Connected with Henrietta Street was a man of high culture and learning, the master of a boarding school in Hunter Street, with whom, and his family, Thomas had entered into close friendship: this was Jonathan Dawson, one of whose sons became the well-known preacher and lecturer, George Dawson, whose statue, for work well done, has been erected by the citizens of Birmingham. Others there were in the little church who were dear friends, but Jonathan Dawson appears to have influenced the young preacher most, and their friendship remained strong until his then deacon died venerable and full of years. On accepting the call to Henrietta Street in June 1828, Thomas Thomas for some time lived at the house of this friend.

What the views of the pastorate held by the minister were are expressed by himself as follows in an address to students: "It is plain then that in seeking the pastoral oversight of Christian Churches, and preparing for it, you desire the office of a bishop or overseer of the flock of God. But you will observe that the words office and work are used" (in a text quoted) "as synonymous or

convertible terms ; and this suggests an important truth relative to the episcopate. It is not a sinecure but a work. The Kingdom of Christ is not of this world : and offers no comfortable livings for indolent incompetency—no large revenues to gratify clerical avarice—no 'splendid prizes' to reward political subserviency—nothing to kindle the ambition of those who covet the honours and emoluments of high office, but will not submit to the toils, self-denials, and labours which the true episcopate demands. And to preserve this sacred office from the intrusion of men of worldly principles and selfish motives, the Lord Jesus has wisely ordained that it should be dependent for its support, not on compulsory exactions, but on the voluntary contributions of those who appreciate and enjoy its benefits."

This passage reveals in most respects the point at which Thomas stood at this time, and, indeed, ever after. The desire evinced for close reference to the earliest Apostolic teaching, the insistence upon personal conviction of the truth of doctrines taught, and the declaration of the popular power in the Church, give the key to the minister's career through life, and explain his position both in religious and political action.

The church at Henrietta Street was justified in its selection of a pastor. Thomas was instant "in season and out of season," preaching with a force and boldness felt by some to be buffeting, yet again healing with the anodynes of merciful promise. The membership increased. The pastor also found time for very various work in the general movements of the time, and developed a business capacity which was found useful in such movements, and thus he became well-known and respected by a wide circle outside his own congregation.

But it was not good to be alone—even surrounded by such attached friends as he was. He ventured, upon the slender salary which could be afforded by his Church, to call to his side the bride for whom he had waited for many

years. Upon a freezing winter day he took coach for Cardiff, and on 22nd February 1830 his marriage took place.

In 1830 the ostracism of Dissent was still almost complete ; the toleration accorded to its continued revolt and dogged resistance was that given to some powerful brute whom the hunter has not arms to slay, and which has the right of range and lair limited to its powers of continual watchfulness.

One regulation very irritating to Nonconformists was that which required marriages to take place in buildings of the Established Church, so that no dissenter could have the services of his own pastor at such time. In this case neither the saintly William Jones nor the godly Christmas Evans could take part in the marriage service of these members of their flocks. They, however, joined the later simple festivities, after which, accompanied for a short distance by Philip David, brother of the bride, the married couple proceeded towards London, stopping, however, at Devizes, where the bridegroom preached, and the next Sunday saw him again in the pulpit of Henrietta Street.

As undoubtedly the consideration of physical conformation largely aids in the analysis of character, it may be well to describe that of bridegroom and bride at this time. Descriptions, and a portrait taken soon after, show Thomas Thomas at the age of twenty-five as a man of exceptional physical advantages. Nearly five feet eleven in height, he was of slight but athletic figure, and possessed of considerable muscular strength. He was of fair complexion, with light brown hair, and eyes clear and almost blue. The features were unusually well and delicately chiselled to a classical regularity. In type he was more Teuton than Celt, though all his known forebears were Welsh-speaking. The Vale of Glamorgan has a population containing much Norman and Fleming blood, and his type is not rare. The bride, a few months the younger,

was of Celtic type, rather tall and slender; her dark, rosy face was set against brown hair of a deep shade, and her eyes, large and very dark, had a solemn gaze, almost mystical. Of the pair it is no exaggeration to quote the words:

> "For Contemplation he and Valour form'd,
> For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.
> He for God only, she for God in him."

The incidents and circumstances of the early life of Thomas Thomas have been given, it may appear, with unnecessary detail, but this has been done with an object. These circumstances were, with modifications, those of almost all ministers of Nonconformist bodies in Wales. Not only of ministers, but also of that large company of honest God-fearing men and women of the middle and lower class who formed the body of Dissent. It must always be borne in mind that until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century every child in Wales, in fact, belonged to the Established Church, and had undergone its rites. We see in the life we are describing a child of parents giving, it may be, a limited and careless, yet real adhesion to that Church turning from it exactly in the degree in which its moral sense and general intelligence developed. Having a clear idea of its tenets, and at first taught by a priest of that Church under the shadow of one of its cathedrals, the boy yet in spite of all such influences turned an ear rather to the words of unlearned labourers than to those of the lettered clerics. Such a process was going on largely over the whole country, but in Wales with strange rapidity. And it affected the flower of the classes named. The very existence of Dissent depended upon the virtue of its professors. Upon hardly any estate in Wales was a Nonconformist desired; those who held tenancies did so because they were superior to the average in industry and regularity in their payments.

The beliefs they held had a tendency to render their political views antagonistic to the classes above them, and every election was followed by a flight of notices to quit farms and tenements. There was everything on the side of the Established Church—power, pecuniary influence, a type of respectability, learning; as against weakness, want of organisation, poverty, illiteracy, obloquy. Yet, we have the strange spectacle of great numbers of people following, against all natural law, the line, not of the least, but of the greatest resistance. For what reason? Not, at bottom, doctrinal reasons, for many dissenting denominations differed on such points little from the Church of England, then prevailingly evangelical — not on account of defects of character or conduct on the part of clerics or adherents, for these were often conspicuous for their high character, even if many were wanting in faith and ardour.

The main reason was that inherent in churches by law established, which at their great centres become over-organised, enervated by ill-adjusted wealth, betrayed by continued subserviencies to powerful classes, and temptations to harshness in opposing the reasonable desires of the people. Such weeds spring up, choking the grain and casting their seeds over all the field, render the harvest but a few meagre sheaves.

Such, from writing and word, we gather the opinion of Thomas Thomas to have been as regards general ethical reasons, but he added to them the devout belief that the establishment of religion, in its essence spiritual, by means of the forces of human law, was no less than a blasphemy of the Divine Spirit, that could never long prosper.

The pastorate of Henrietta Street lasted for a period of seven years, marked by great success. The chapel became a centre of busy workers whose energies were not only engaged in edification but in missionary work

in the poor districts around. The pastor had an intense pleasure in outdoor preaching, and from services held in Farringdon Road, and a court of the Old Bailey, many poor souls were brought into touch with the Church.

Upon one of these occasions a very rough Smithfield porter, after listening intently, suddenly withdrew, and presently returned with a foaming pot of ale and a cheery "Here, Mister, you must be getting dry." This rough kindness was embarrassing, as the preacher was already a strong believer in total abstinence.

On 18th September 1831, which fell upon a Sunday, a son was given to the pair. A note upon the event is very characteristic. With all his natural anxieties, he yet preached on that day "three times with pleasure," and adds:—

"In the occurrences of to-day I have seen the execution of the sentence originally pronounced upon the woman's transgression, yet how strangely does God in wrath remember mercy! I regard this child as a generous gift of heaven. Yet, what increased responsibility devolves upon me. . . . The Lord aid us to bring him up in the knowledge and practice of the Scriptures, which are able to make him wise unto salvation."

The time at which Thomas Thomas was to take up his life-work approached. In spite of his many interests in London, he had kept always in touch with his native land; and in spite of prospects even brilliant in town, there was at the bottom of his heart a homesickness. The president of his old college at Abergavenny, Micah Thomas, resigned, and friends of the college pressed an invitation upon the pastor to take the post, which was accepted; the preliminaries were soon arranged, and a parting full of sorrow on both sides took place. The president-elect of the college, then in course of removal to Pontypool, took up his duties in 1836. A house was

hired and the work begun, the students numbering only seven, most of whom were older than their new tutor and president, for Thomas Thomas was both. He became indeed a pluralist: he had to teach Theology, Hebrew, Classics, and, practically, English, to organise the search for funds, to aid in the building of a college, and to be of use generally at the salary of £140 in all, being a considerable decrease from his salary in London.

The new president set to his task with alacrity and goodwill; as in London, so here, he was surrounded by a ring of friends. In nothing do these annals of the earlier nineteenth century strike the reader more than in the intenseness of the friendships shown to exist in these small communities. Letters were then couched in very ceremonious terms; yet, expressions were used which strike us of a less polite but more reticent age with wonder. Men were truly fraternal, the "dear brother" of their address was no mere fashion of speech, and we are not surprised that these little *centuriæ* of soldiers of Christ, marching so closely, locking their bucklers of faith together, should have achieved many victories.

Thomas Thomas had succeeded in attaining a proficiency in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages greater than was absolutely necessary for the post as then existing. He had a facility in grasping language, which he always attributed to his having been, from a boy, accustomed to the daily use of tongues differing so greatly in their genius as Welsh and English. He taught at this time chiefly through Welsh, with quick success, thus practically antedating the methods of to-day.

But the cares of the college were not the whole of the young president's charge. It was understood that with the aid of a company of worshippers which had gathered under the care of W. W. Phillips, a gentleman of position in the neighbourhood, an English Baptist church would be formed, of which Thomas Thomas would take the pastorate.

This was accomplished in 1836, and the infant church met at the Quakers' Meeting House, Trosnant. It comprised only sixteen members, but rapidly grew larger.

The history of the English Baptist chapel was one of success, but it was not eventful. The space at the Friends' Meeting House soon became too small for the congregations, and an effort was made to erect a building of their own upon a site in Crane Street. This chapel, built in classic style, was architecturally much above the average of its time, and commodious. It has no pulpit, but a platform and reading-desk made to the pastor's design, who preferred such an arrangement as giving more freedom to the minister. The cost was £2,200. It was opened in April 1847.

Soon after the opening the question of "open" Communion came before the members, when the votes on either side were equal. The pastor did not give a casting vote, and the church remained closed; his former charge had been "open."

In 1854-55 Thomas Thomas passed through a period of bitter sorrow: two sons, Llewelyn and William Thomas, just arrived at manhood, died within a few months of one another. Both were excellent young men, the second possessed great intellectual gifts, and was a student for the ministry. Their loss cast a cloud over their parents' lives, followed as it was by the death of two nieces living with them.

In 1860 the church lost by death the venerated chief deacon, W. W. Phillips of Maesderwen, its founder. The record on the church book says truly:

"He feared God from his youth. He was never weary in well-doing. He abounded in good works. His usefulness continued to the last. He died in peace at the age of seventy-four years. 'His praise is in all the churches.'"

When Thomas Thomas resigned the pastorate on

account, as he considered, of inability to serve in accordance with the growth of the church, the membership had risen to 156. Two hundred and forty-three baptisms had taken place at the hands of the pastor. The church had worked, and had been generous, having spent about £3,000 upon the chapel, also aiding other causes and movements. It had become a power in the town and neighbourhood, as, under other worthy men, it remains to the present.

Exterior to the work of the college and chapel, the first matter which engaged the energies of the young president was Chartism. The principles of the celebrated "Charter," many of which are now incorporated into the constitution of the United Kingdom, were at the time looked upon as treasonable. The miserable condition of the working classes generally made any agitation among them dangerous, and wild suggestions of the possibility of radical changes set them on fire. Riots broke out, at first in the North and Midlands, and in 1839 the masses in the hills of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan broke into rebellion, swept down the valley of the Avon Llwyd through Pontypool to Newport, where the mob was put to flight by a company of soldiers who, gallantly defending the Westgate Hotel, fired upon the rioters attacking from the open space, who broke and fled.

Every possible effort was made by the Tory party, which included almost all the clergy of the Church of England, to fix upon Dissent as the origin, and Nonconformist ministers as the agents, of this revolt. An article in the *Standard*, reasonable in the main from its own standpoint, tried to enforce this calumny as regards the parish of Trevethin, a great tract of country including many coal and iron works, and in which the town of Pontypool stands.

Thomas Thomas upon this wrote a sermon, afterwards published with an appendix, upon the text, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," and describing the

"Civil Duties of Christians." The preacher himself was then, as always, a disciple of the school of George Fox, averse to the use of physical force in any form. The author states the sermon to be published, because

"He believes it to contain the general principles of the great body of Dissenters upon the subject of Civil Obedience, and hopes it may serve in some measure to counteract the falsehoods of those who are industriously endeavouring to trace the late outbreak of violence to the principles of civil and religious liberty as maintained by Nonconformists, that they may thus bring odium upon a religious body whose Scriptural instructions and moral influence deterred many thousands in the County of Monmouth from any participation in the riots."

In the sermon the doctrine of "passive obedience" is preached as opposed to "active obedience," and the writer claims the emancipation of eight hundred thousand slaves, the "repeal of the infamous Test and Corporation Acts," the privileges accorded to the Society of Friends, etc., as instances of what can be effected by peaceful means.

"Passive obedience," he says, "is exemplified by the conduct of the Quakers, whose property is taken for non-payment of ecclesiastical demands, in the imprisonment of the churchwardens of Llanelly and Llanon, and in the sufferings of Thoroughgood, who has been nearly twelve months in Chelmsford Jail for non-payment of five shillings and sixpence Church rate."

It may be noted that the "passive obedience" of 1839 is the "passive resistance" of 1905.

In the appendix he examines the statistics, and declares that, after many careful enquiries, he finds that "not fifty members of Nonconformist churches joined the rioters, whether voluntarily or under compulsion"; then he rolls back the accusation, and says the rioters were not Dissenters, but "the neglected population of the

Parliamentary Church," and he affirms that "our churches have now, as ever, proved themselves to be the watchful guardians of public tranquillity, and the strongest bulwarks of political morality and social virtue."

The Baptist College having been built on the mountain-side among woods, at Penygarn, the collegiate work went on with vigour. After a few years of lonely labour, in 1841 the number of students required, and the funds permitted, the addition of a Classical tutor, George Thomas, a man of sterling learning and personal worth. President and tutor worked together in mutual respect and friendship. The committee was most capable, comprising men of the highest estimation in the denomination—the honoured names of W. W. Phillips, David Phillips, J. Jenkins, Stephen Price, Isaac Hiley, Evans of Pontrhydyrun, William Conway, Charles Conway, William Conway, junior, with—taking the whole period of Thomas Thomas's presidency—many others equally worthy of mention.

Very soon the basis of a good library was formed, a fine nucleus being given by Hugh H. Williams, a retired minister at Cheltenham, whose generosity in this way never ceased until he had emptied his shelves of a noble collection of standard works. Others made additions, and in later times, J. Horsepool, of Leicester, largely enriched this department.

College life had interesting characteristics, the men working hard under a methodical and punctual president all the week, and preaching as "supplies" in the small churches within reach on Sundays. In the earlier times no conveyances existed, and they walked long distances, sometimes twenty miles, to reach their stations: the average fee may not have been as much as five shillings, but they had warm welcome, and made many friends. "The boys," as the old people called them, were indeed soundly criticised, but encouraged heartily. In the

summer vacation their preaching work continued—each had a district allotted him over the whole of South Wales—in each church which he had to visit, giving a sermon or address, and making a collection for the college; almost all the travelling was done afoot. Entry to the college constituted in fact a scholarship; but as there was no endowment, they might be termed scholarships upon the "while-you-wait" principle. Out of these simple conditions came some of the finest men Wales has known, great preachers, sympathetic with the toiling classes, whose hard stoical lives they knew so well, holy men. Some urgency happened on one occasion which obliged the men to total up their wealth; among the twenty men it totalled £2 10s. 0d. This apostolic poverty was accompanied by apostolic hearts which beat the *réveille* of Advance.

As time went on the conditions became less strenuous, the means of churches increased, means of communication were more numerous and cheaper.

The qualities of the president were exactly suited to the conditions. He knew by experience the circumstances under which the student stood; there were few contingencies of a workman's life he did not know. He knew the failings they would be prone to, and the virtues that underlie the rough surface of men who have worked with their hands for their daily bread. In addition, he had insight into character, and power of directing a student's powers into the channels most suited for the individual. Above all, he had a deep fraternal affection for the men under his care. With students from the middle class his power was similar.

It would be impossible to particularise in a sketch which has already grown beyond the space allotted.

It should be mentioned that his denomination tendered the president the greatest honour in its power by electing him to the chair of the Baptist Union of Great Britain in 1872.

The position of Thomas Thomas in regard to the rights of citizenship were definite, and are given in a paper read at the Swansea Conference of the Liberation Society in 1862. He had been a member of the committee of the Society from its beginning :—

"We shall, no doubt, be assailed with the old cry of 'political Dissenters'; but this we can afford to despise as a senseless accusation, for what are politics but the morals of nations? And what is a political Dissenter but a Christian Nonconformist, honestly doing his duty to God and man as a member of a civil society? And who are they who utter this cry? They are the members of a political church, acknowledging a political head, governed by political bishops, founded on Acts of Parliament. . . . Dissenters are citizens as well as Christians, and as citizens of a free State, and subjects of a constitutional Government, they have rights and duties which they must not ignore. . . .

"Let us attend to our political duties in the fear of God and faithfully endeavour to hand down to posterity, unimpaired and improved, the inestimable blessing of civil and religious liberty. Let us arise and advance. A timid policy will not avail us . . . our policy is no longer defensive, but aggressive. *We spurn toleration as an insult, and demand religious equality as a right.*"

The position of the Nonconformists as to the education question as it arose in 1847 is shown by five strong resolutions drawn up by Thomas Thomas and passed at a meeting in Pontypool. The resolutions were approved by nearly all the congregations of the district, and were in harmony with those of other meetings throughout Wales. The first runs :—

"That . . . it is the right and duty of parents and other natural guardians to provide for and control the education of the young, aided, where needed, by the voluntary efforts of the humane and benevolent, that it forms no part of the ordinary duty of Civil Government to train the mind

of the people, that so important a work cannot be entrusted to any Administration without great hazard to the parental rights, the domestic comfort, the manly independence, and the civil and religious liberty of the subject; and that the only real and lasting service the Legislature can render to popular education is the immediate removal of all the remaining taxes on knowledge."

The fourth says:—

"It will virtually set up a new religious establishment at about one-fourth of the cost of the old one; recognising in *theory* the infidel principle of State pay for the inculcation of different and contradictory religious doctrines, but *practically* putting the inspectors and teachers, the revenues and instructions of the children, almost wholly under the influence of the dignitaries and clergy of the Church establishment, while its obvious tendency is to destroy the day and Sabbath Schools of Dissenters, whose conscientious scruples will not allow them to accept Government grants nor to admit of Government interference for religious instruction."

The minutes in question do not seem to have met with much approval by the inspector of the district, for on 17th March 1847, Jelinger C. Symons, a name at that moment execrated by Nonconformity, writes to the framer of the above resolutions as follows:—

"I have endeavoured in my Report to give a full and fair view of the amount and quality of education in my district, and as regards a large majority of schools my reports of them were written before I had seen the Minutes of Council, and I can honestly say that the remainder will be written without the slightest reference to them; the new Minutes are in my judgment inapplicable to the Principality as far as my experience has gone.

"I cannot but think the terms in which you speak of the recent Minutes and of the Administration are intemperate and attributable to the misstatement of the

measure put forth in the circular of the Central Committee inserted in the *Patriot*."

Many changes of opinion and policy have affected the question of National Education since 1847. The School Board era has come and gone, but in view of the Bill of 1902, and the revolt it has occasioned, the opinions expressed in the resolutions are worthy of consideration.

Passing over nearly thirty years' life so full of varied effort, we find the life we sketch had arrived at its autumn, the powerful frame of his prime had become portly and somewhat bent, the fine features had upon them lines of wear, of labour, and of sorrow, the locks fell in waves of silver that had been so brown. Yet there remained great vigour, and the cheerfulness of soul was undimmed. In 1875 Thomas Thomas felt that a work that had so prospered under him should pass into younger hands. He prepared for the resignation of his charge. In view of this his many friends gathered, and chiefly under the organisation of his old student and lifelong friend, the late Rev. Dr. J. W. Todd of Forest Hill, London, a testimonial was proposed. Then it was seen what steadfast friends he had, for from far and near, from every continent, came contributions. The sum swelled to over two thousand pounds, and this magnificent sum was presented to the retiring president at a meeting in Cardiff, presided over by one who as a boy had attended his preachings in Henrietta Street, London, the Judge, The Right Hon. Sir Robert Lush. The presentation took place at the Tabernacle, the home of early days, on 29th September 1876.

The resignation of the presidency of the college took place at the end of 1876, and in June 1877 Thomas Thomas retired to Cardiff, and there, on 23rd February 1880, was celebrated the Golden Wedding of the pair we have seen at their marriage in St John's Church. The

celebration took place in the school-room of Bethany Chapel, close beside the church.

On 18th March 1881 Mrs Thomas, the faithful lover, friend, and wife, passed away: a few months afterwards, on 7th December of the same year, Thomas Thomas ended his earthly career by sudden change, such as he desired; and, with every honour that can be paid to an honoured minister and citizen, was laid to rest beside his wife and sons in the chapel-yard of the old Tabernacle at Penygarn, close to his beloved college.

Thomas Thomas was a believer in the canon of the Scriptures as generally accepted and in the natural meaning of their contents in the languages in which they were written, minor textual emendations being excepted. His preaching was simply Scriptural, and thence drew its power. In his younger period his words swept along with a flow found by many to be resistless. It was the opinion of many men of authority that, had he remained in London, he would have attained a position as a popular preacher second to none. At the time he left he was probably the foremost of the younger men. There are hints to show that, modest as he was on the point, he quite saw on leaving Henrietta Street that such a hope was to be abandoned. On taking up his many duties at Pontypool his fiery eloquence continued, but by about 1850 his style had become subdued, and a "sweet reasonableness" prevailed. His style, though based upon that of the great preachers of the eighteenth century, and academic in diction, was simple, straightforward, amusingly exemplified by the remark of a good, quite illiterate member of his church during his absence: she "wanted the old doctor back: the others are so 'grammatical.'" This simplicity was marked in his out-of-door sermons, none of which were written, but which were patterns of elegance of diction and persuasiveness. He always gave of his best.

From the beginning to the end of his career he was fascinated by the Apocalypse, which stirred the mystic within him, and some of his discourses thereon were, it is not too much to say, magnificent. There was always a reference in his writing to Classic models, and in the drawer of his writing table, with his Greek Testament, there always lay a Virgil and a Horace. His power of *ex tempore* speaking in the pulpit was great, rising to eloquence. He was less at home upon the platform, which he ascended from a sense of duty rather than choice; there his audiences thought more highly of his efforts than he did himself.

The whole of the life was prayer and praise. Nothing was begun without prayer, nothing ended without thanksgiving. Prayer was the great panacea for every ill, the encouragement to every deed, the shelter from every storm, the crown of every joy.

In praise he was not less constant: keenly sensitive to the beauties of music, he was never without the memory of some of the grand old tunes which ever and anon came to his lips in song—those old, well-constructed harmonies, compared to which, many tunes in vogue to-day are little more than "coon" melodies, with a vamped accompaniment. Those and old Welsh tunes, permeated with Celtic melancholy, were often heard to roll out in his large baritone. When deafness had become confirmed, he would sit reading the harmony to himself from the book, or kneel close to an instrument to hear the performer.

With all his amiability, Thomas Thomas was a strict disciplinarian and severe. He had the highest ideal of conduct for those set apart for the ministry of the Gospel, and visited delinquency with sharpest reproof and punishment—with as much pain to himself as to the culprit, but never without kind remonstrance and fraternal prayer. One excellent man but turbulent student, who afterwards attained a marked honour and respect, said: "I could stand

any punishment from the doctor except his prayer: when he knelt with me in his study it broke me down: but for that I should have become a castaway." We have used the word "fraternal": he never assumed the paternal or superior air: his speech and manner had the old-style respectful courtesy whether to noble or labourer.

He believed it the duty of every religious man to watch vigilantly all political movements, and thus to help in so regulating them that they should subserve the main Christian virtues, while yet giving free and equal room for the expression of the widest differences of religious opinion. Such opinions are expressed in minute detail in several published pamphlets and letters upon the rights and duties of Christian citizens. Naturally, therefore, he was an avowed, and, said his opponents, a violent enemy to all connection between Church and State, whether such as exists in England or in the form known as "concurrent" endowment. But he was not a bigot. Towards the Church of England, in so far as it, or other denominations, included in their doctrines simple and central Christian truth, he felt no enmity, but true friendship, working side by side often in gladness with those whose theological views and ecclesiastical position were far from his.

During his time a vast change took place in the Established Church; first the "Tractarian" Movement, so large a part in which it may be noted was due to the quiet influence and writings of another leading, though secluded, Welshman—Isaac Williams. Following that, as its corollary, came the development of what is known as Ritualism.

In regard to these his opinions were distinct. He agreed with the contention that the liturgy should naturally be read in the sense those schools put upon it, and that, in the main, they were justified in their view of the priestly office as there described. Accordingly, in

his writings and in his speeches the word "priest" was used generally as a definition.

With Thomas Thomas's view as to the conditions and government of the Primitive Church, there was here a very solid wall of division, and in speaking of it he predicted from the "forties" the condition of the English Church in the "nineties," with great precision as to both growth and development.

With these opinions it is certain where Thomas Thomas would be in the revolt against Church rates, which was a burning question of the middle of the century. Nonconformity had risen in revolt against the impost, and the stalwarts were standing in the dock in face of the majesty of British law.

At Pontypool a group of passive obedience men made a sturdy fight, and the police bearing furniture along the streets became a common sight. The newspapers were filled with correspondence from which admirable flowers of speech may be culled. One of these referring to Thomas Thomas as the "Lion of Penygarn" was not inappropriate, though not intended to be complimentary. The "lion's" lair was invaded to the intense delight of the "lion-cubs," who formed a procession to the town in honour of the police who "convened" the prey.

Any departure from the principle of protest against State patronage and control of religion was most distasteful, such, for instance, as the "Church parade," usual on the election of mayors of boroughs, whether that took place at church or chapel. Thus, upon the refusal of Alderman Daniel Lewis, when elected Mayor of Cardiff in 1878, to hold such a function, Thomas Thomas wrote and headed the signatures of almost all the ministers in the borough to an address of approval of his action. The Mayor in reply says: "As Nonconformists, we have a principle to maintain, and I feel that loyalty to principle

is the safest road upon which to travel. I thank you and the noble band whose names I honour."

The connection of Thomas Thomas with the Temperance Movement was of long standing. In his youth copious drinking was the rule. In the upper classes there were still "four bottle men"; in the working class beer was even more acceptable than to-day. Alcohol in some potable form was looked upon as a prime necessity. Gradually the necessity was questioned as regards spirits, and what was called the "short pledge" was instituted, which allowed of beer, wines, and other lighter drinks in moderation, but prohibited spirits—"a thin end of the wedge" which was soon driven in to the butt by the total abstinence pledge. Thomas Thomas took both successively, and joined the supporters of the United Kingdom Alliance at its formation, and throughout his course did everything in his power by pen and speech to further its aims, both social and political. This was gracefully acknowledged by the organ of the Alliance at the death of their staunch friend.

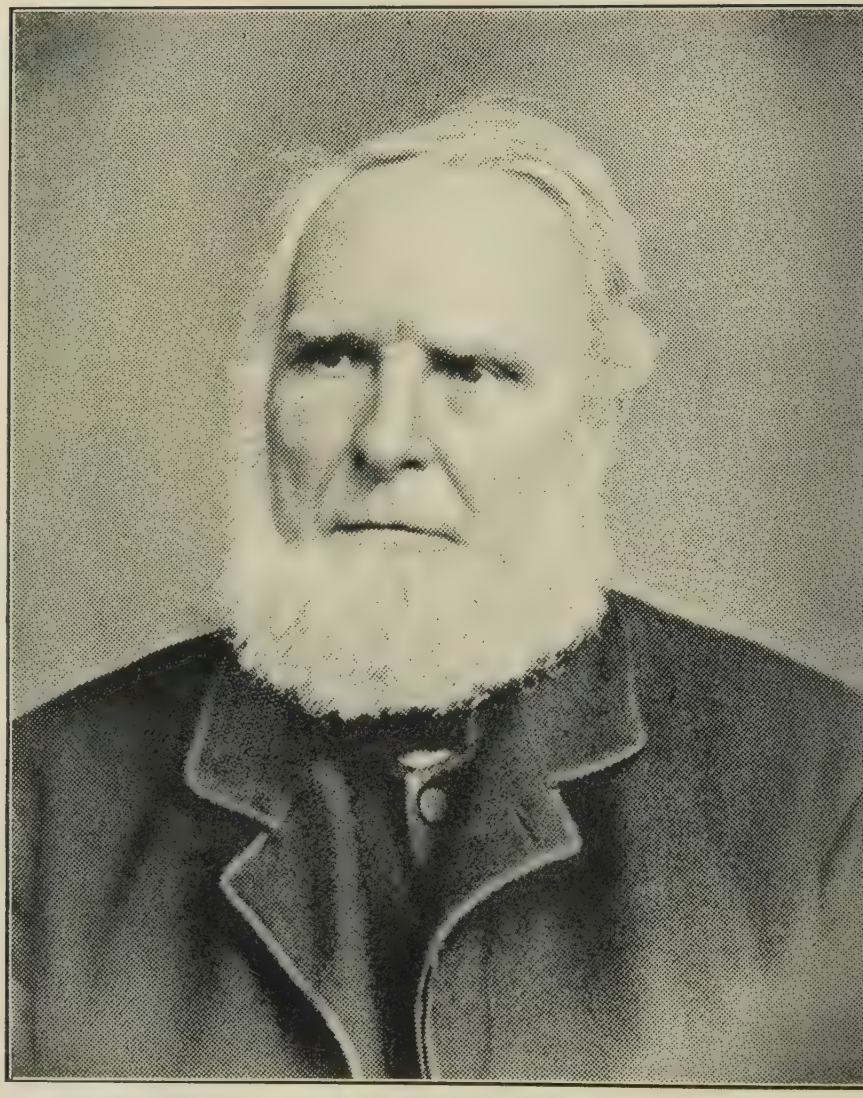
It is hoped by the writer that, throughout this necessarily brief account of Thomas Thomas, the analysis of his work and character has been tacitly separated by the marshalling of his acts and words.

The reader may have seen how completely rounded the life was, how direct, frank, and simple the career from childhood to old age, how many qualities not often found in harmonious combination met in it. Patient to a great degree, Thomas Thomas was yet alert in action: he could dig laboriously in the trench, and yet be in the van of the escalade; business-like and most methodical in money matters, knowing the value of small sums as only a poor man can, yet open-handed in charity and the movements he was interested in to a point that sometimes met with friendly remonstrance, when he would answer with a

smile, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." Doggedly industrious, yet ever in his small leisure cheerful, songful, hilarious. Children and the young delighted in his society; the old found in him sympathy and help. Luxuriating in the amenities of peace, and luxuriating not less in "joy of battle with his peers." With a high sense of personal dignity, yet placable even under insults which, using his deafness with innocent cunning, he "did not hear"; living close to the things and movements of the world, and yet profoundly a mystic. Following with sympathetic regret those who fell from accidents of temperament, but stern, perhaps absolutely unforgiving, to intentional cruelty, impurity, and tyranny. Capable of violent passion, he had an absolute restraint over his emotions. In him some of the weaknesses but more of the virtues attributed to both Celt and Teuton met, forming an admirable character.

On being asked what should be the motto of a certain great and good man he replied, "Yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me." And this it was that made the farmer-boy of Leckwith into the wise teacher, the beloved counsellor, the strong leader who did much for the progress and regeneration of his beloved country of Wales at a most critical period.

Essential principles of churches are permanent. Thomas Thomas was either an arch-heretic or a saint of God. Those who hold the principles of the great churches upon which his life was one long attack, should logically hold that he might wisely be handed over to the "civil arm," and "without shedding of blood," be burned at the stake, "*ad maiorem gloriam Dei*." Those who sympathise with the principles he held will think him worthy to be at least a doorkeeper in the House of God.



The Rev. Evan Thomas, Newport. [*To face p.* 161

The Rev. EVAN THOMAS, Newport, Mon.

By the Rev. CHARLES DAVIES, Cardiff

Amongst the Baptists of Wales in the generation that has just passed there was no preacher more highly esteemed than the subject of this article. He was justly regarded, not only by the people, but by his brethren in the ministry, as an ideal preacher; and undoubtedly he had in him the qualities of a great man. He was not so well known throughout the Principality as some of his popular contemporaries. This is partly accounted for by the fact that he held pastorates which demanded his undivided time and attention. However, he often preached at the several great gatherings of his own denomination. His fame had spread far and wide, and people used to come from all parts for the express purpose of hearing him. For a period of forty years he stood in the front rank of the great preachers of his time, and up to the very last there was a constant demand for his services. "His bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

The associations of his childhood were such as to strengthen his disposition to preach. His own father was a preacher, and his father's brother, the Rev. Thomas Thomas, was pastor of the church at Croesy-park, where he was brought up; and there were other members of the family who were devoted ministers of the Gospel.

Evan Thomas was born at Llanbedr-y-Fro (Peterstone-

super-Ely), which is situated about seven miles from the town of Cardiff, in that section of the country known as the Vale of Glamorgan, which has been deservedly called "The Garden of Wales." These lovely surroundings evidently impressed his youthful mind, for his preaching was characterised by freshness, beauty, and naturalness. Indeed the district of Peterstone-super-Ely, or Llanbedr-y-Fro, as we love to call it, has produced not less than thirteen preachers, and that in the church of Croesypark alone. Then there is the seraphic preacher, Morgan Howell, Calvinistic Methodist minister: he came from that neighbourhood; and in another village close by was born the Rev. Job Miles of Aberystwyth, the honoured President of the Congregationalists of Wales for this year.

Evan Thomas was the son of John and Ann Thomas, who were God-fearing and Christ-loving people, and they gave their twelve children the blessings of a Christian home and training. They were both members of the Baptist Church at Croesypark, a church founded in 1777. This church has been blessed with many useful and eminent ministers and office-bearers. One of them was David, or Dafydd, William, formally of Llandilo Fach, the author of many of our most popular Welsh hymns, "Yn y dyfroedd mawr a'r tonnau," etc., being one of them. He died in 1794, at the age of eighty-two, and was buried near Croesypark chapel, and it is to be hoped that a worthy monument will soon be erected to commemorate his life and work. There is, I am glad to state, a movement on foot to secure that end.

Evan Thomas was baptized and received into the church at Croesypark at the age of thirteen by his uncle, who was then the pastor. The baptism took place in the River Ely, close to the chapel. His two brothers, Edward and William, had already commenced to preach. A sister of his was a member of the Baptist Tabernacle

Church, at Cardiff, up to the time of her death, which took place a few months ago after she had passed her eightieth year. Jane Thomas—for as such she was known—was really a noted character, and a good specimen of the family from which she had sprung, and of the race to which she belonged.

When Evan Thomas was about seventeen years of age, one of the deacons suggested to him the desirability of directing his thoughts to the ministry. Three years subsequently the matter was brought to his notice by some of the brethren, and he finally decided to devote his life to the work of preaching the Gospel. His first attempt, however, was not very encouraging: he gave out his text, which was in Matthew, 4th chapter, 19th verse, but he could go no further, for his mind became enveloped in great darkness, and not a thought or word he had prepared could he express. The first attempt of Christmas Evans, Robert Hall, and other famous men, was something similar. When a boy, Evan Thomas was frequently seen with a number of his village playmates around him to hear him preach. On one occasion he surprised them with the following supposition:—"What if every stone in all the world were one stone, would not that be a very big stone? And what if every mountain in all the world were one mountain, would not that be a great mountain? And what if every brass pan in all the world were one brass pan, would not that be a big brass pan? And what if that big stone were to fall from that big mountain into that big brass pan, what an awfully great sound it would make?" In this amusing incident we have a touch of the humour, the love of the marvellous, and the power of description, which characterised him as a preacher. As his biographer (the Rev. W. Jones "Ap Rhys," Newport) states, he was a man of vivid imagination, and took some wild and venturesome flights. He playfully adds that Evan Thomas invariably had in his

sermons some great brass pan which never failed to create a sensation among his hearers.

It was at Pontypridd, under the pastorate of the renowned preacher, James Richards, that Evan Thomas began his career as a preacher. Mr Richards settled as pastor of Carmel chapel in June 1838, and Evan Thomas settled in the neighbourhood about the same time, having obtained a situation at the chain works. The Carmel people had no knowledge of what had transpired at Croesypark, but he greatly impressed them as a pious and gifted young man, and they induced him to preach. His second attempt was more successful, although his progress as a speaker was very slow. But in his pastor, the Rev. James Richards, he found a model friend and leader. Under God's guidance the Rev. James Richards proved a source of great inspiration to him. As Elisha got the mantle of the inspired prophet Elijah, so did Evan Thomas catch the spirit of the great preacher who was then his pastor and his guide. The following quotation from Evan Thomas's preface to James Richards's published sermons will give the readers an insight into the gifts and graces of the man who played such a prominent part in moulding the mind and directing the spirit of the subject of our sketch :—

"It is not an easy task," he says, "to give a description of Mr Richards as a preacher. He was noted and great; but that greatness did not consist in one excellence. Many excellencies met together in him, and that in a most lovely harmony. His sermon was characterised by 'the spirit of the living thing,' and with a wonderful tenderness. His ministry influenced the heart most deeply, and at the same time opened the understanding. If we could place the reader in the same circumstance as we ourselves were in, we could give him some idea of the nature of this influence. We had the privilege of being at Carmel, Pontypridd, listening to Mr Richards preaching for the first time as pastor of the church. That was on

17th June 1838. *June*—one of the pleasantest months in the year; *the Sabbath*—the most precious day of the week; *the morning*—the most refreshing time and hour of the day. With us all, it was a morning in June, and a Sabbath in and through everything. The text was, 'My sheep hear my voice,' etc. The preacher spoke of sheep, shepherd, fold, pasture, etc.; and to crown all there was the voice of Jesus and the voice of James Richards in sweet tones reaching our ears and mingling together into a heavenlier music than we had ever heard before. If all the circumstances and incidents of that time and hour could be brought together in one cluster as they appeared to us, and affected us then, there would stand before our eyes an object somewhat like what Mr Richards was in our opinion as a preacher:—the *June* of the year, the *Sabbath* of the week, the *morning* of the Sabbath, and its light shining on sheep, shepherd, fold, pasture, and the sweetest voice of heaven (that of Jesus) with the most musical voice of earth (that of James Richards) vibrating in the air around us. From that day to the end of his life, Mr Richards was to us a kind of month-of-June preacher. A heavenly dew, thick, profuse, and productive, or a sun's vitalising warmth, was his sermon at all times. When he took from the enemy a castle or a city, it would not be by storming the battlements, and filling the air with noise, but by quietly undermining the walls till they fell in a heap as it were of themselves."

Evan Thomas entered Pontypool Baptist College in January 1842. Dr Thomas was the principal at the time, the classical tutor being George Thomas, M.A. Mr Thomas never failed to acknowledge his indebtedness to Pontypool College, for his early education had been sadly neglected. There were no day schools in his native village, although it seems that he had, a short time before he entered college, the advantages of a night school kept by Thomas Bowen. During the third year of his college life he received a call to the church at Nebo, Ebbw Vale. For some little time he served the church monthly while

pursuing his studies at the college. During this time he developed a unique method of preparing his sermons. After dinner on Friday, he would lie on his back on the table in the dining-room, and oblivious of everything that was said and done, he would continue in deep thought in that position until he saw his way clear.

At the expiration of his third year at Pontypool (then the allotted period) he commenced his ministry at Nebo, Ebbw Vale: that was in 1845. It was a strong and flourishing church, about the only Baptist church in that populous district at the time. His ministry there lasted three years, and there the foundation of his future popularity was laid. For the sake of his health he removed to Bassaleg, near Newport, where his health greatly improved. In December 1850, he undertook the pastorate of Bethania church, Cardigan. He was then thirty-two years of age. He grew in power and popularity, and his ministry—extending over four years—was highly successful. In 1854 he accepted an invitation to Siloh, Tredegar, Monmouthshire. He was now in the very prime of life, and he had as his neighbours the Rev. R. Ellis ("Cynddelw") and Dr J. Emlyn Jones. There were other famous men in the same association: Evan Jones ("Gwrwst"); Rowe of Risca; Timothy Thomas; and Mathetes. In 1861 he removed to Charles Street, Newport, where he laboured until an English branch-church had been established at Portland Street, and he undertook the pastorate. He was there for twenty-five years, and succeeded in building up a large and influential church. A commodious building was erected in Commercial Street with seating capacity for one thousand people. In 1888, after a successful pastorate extending over a quarter of a century, he retired from the ministry altogether, the Church providing him with a pension. He died in September 1893, and was buried at Newport.

It was in 1870 that I heard Mr Thomas first, when

his fame as a preacher had already been established. It was at the association meeting at Rhyl. He did not seem in a very happy mood, and as he ascended the pulpit there was a look of displeasure in his face. The reason was not far to seek. He was the third preacher in that evening service, and it was getting late, and the congregation seemed restless. The first thing he said was, "Is there any sense in getting up to preach now at 9 o'clock?" And surely there was no sense in it. All the conditions were against him, but it was evident to all thinking men that he was no ordinary preacher. Indeed, I overheard a brother saying then that "Evan Thomas was interesting even when in the ditch." I heard him afterwards under better conditions, and when he was in a happier frame of mind, and oh, how his face beamed, and how he seemed to throw out ideas by the very tone of his voice and the glance of his eye. I cannot forget the manner in which he played with a phrase or an argument, and the wealth of meaning in every emphasis that he made. New worlds seemed to open up before us. Then after the argument and the reasoning, often long sustained, there came the great shout like a trumpet, so full, so loud, and musical, that it actually mesmerised the people. It was the shout of triumph. I heard of him at Penuel, Rhymney, after reaching the climax of his argument, with one mighty shout causing the whole audience to stand up as one man.

He was a man of fine presence, about five feet and eleven inches in height, tall, well-formed, with black curly hair; always well dressed, having the appearance and manner of a gentleman. He was neither timid nor impertinent. He was unassuming, yet full of dignity; a man conscious of his strength, yet never overbearing. His appearance in the pulpit was always pleasing. Besides, God had endowed him with rich mental gifts, and they were well cultivated. He impressed all who came in contact with him, as a great personality, born to preach and to command. As

a preacher he was true to himself, always following the bent of his own mind. He was humorous, argumentative, and strong in the imaginative quality. His reasoning faculties were well developed. His descriptive power was simply wonderful. He had the faculty of making others see what he had seen. His phraseology was not of the stereotype kind. His utterances bore the stamp of his own personality. He always assumed that he was speaking to men of understanding and intelligence, and his audience never failed to see and appreciate the compliment. On the other hand, he never flattered. He never coaxed, and never played the priest. He was a man speaking to men, and had full confidence in the truth itself. Probably he was in error here, for men are not so much in love with truth as such. Men have their prejudices and their self-interest, and as a rule are very well satisfied with themselves. To him, however, it was sufficient to present the truth from his view-point. But he never antagonised his hearers. He understood the people, and in his own inimitable way secured their confidence, and by some playful observation made them smile at their own peculiar prejudices, and all was done in the best of taste and never calculated to hurt the feelings of those who might differ from him. He was a magnanimous man, and if he could not win his way by fair means he did not wish to win it at all. He never demeaned himself, and was utterly devoid of pomp or ostentation. He was wise and kind in his dealings with men, fair, frank, and gentle. He often seemed like a pleader in court, conscious of the justice and strength of his case, setting forth his proofs and marshalling his arguments in a truly magnificent fashion. Undoubtedly he could have made his mark as a lawyer. Whether he had taken up logic as a special study I do not know, but the natural bent of his mind was in that direction, and his thoughts habitually took logical form. He delighted in syllogisms,

and was a master at making points. But he was not only a profound and logical thinker: he was a man of imagination. He possessed the poetic instinct in a very large measure, though he never wrote poetry. The sublime and wonderful in nature and in revelation had a strong fascination for him. He had a creative and a fertile mind, and clothed his thoughts in a form both beautiful and attractive. He did not deal much in anecdotes, although he could tell a story well. However, his discourses abounded in similes and comparisons, and he had a very happy method of suggesting truths by contrast.

He was a preacher who evidently wished not only to entertain and instruct his hearers, but to do them good in the highest sense of the word. In all his pulpit efforts he endeavoured to edify men, and to encourage them in all that was true and noble. His mission was to save men. In this saving work he endeavoured not only to pluck them as brands from the burning, but also to elevate their thoughts, to purify their minds, and to develop the good in them in every way. He seemed to dwell mostly on the sunny side of things. He took his stand on Calvary rather than on Sinai, although when occasion demanded it he could be stern and terrific in his denunciation of sin. By his bright and cheering ministry he was the means undoubtedly of chasing away sorrow from many a troubled heart, and with his delightful logic and sweet reasonableness was able to drive unbelief out of many a doubting mind.

He was thoroughly *loyal to the Word of God*, and was an able expositor of the Scriptures. He did not content himself with a shallow and superficial knowledge of their contents. He would endeavour always to go to the root of everything, and in his study of the Bible he delighted in tracing out its root-principles. He would also very carefully see to the wording and the phrasing of his text,

and would sometimes play on the words, or place such emphasis upon them as to make them stand out in bold relief or in vivid colour before his audience. But he sought always to bring into light the deep, underlying principles. The Book of God was to him a deep mine to dig in, and to find therein hidden treasures to be displayed before the delighted eyes of those around him. He believed that the Christian ministry ought to be loyal to the Divine Word, and should lay deep the foundations of its preaching in the understanding and interpretation of its great truths. To him the Bible was the final authority on all that pertains to life and godliness. He believed with all his heart its great doctrines. God, sin, atonement, judgment, heaven, and hell, were not mere words or sounds to him, but great realities which influenced his life most powerfully, and stamped all his sermons with greatness and power.

It has been said that "the indispensable characteristics of a good discourse are *simplicity*, *force*, and *beauty*." On all these points Evan Thomas was not wanting. As to *simplicity*, he laboured to make everything clear as daylight. He delighted in exhibiting a thing in different aspects, and to give it its precise value or meaning as looked upon from different standpoints. He sought for lucidity in all things, and endeavoured at all cost to make his meaning plain. In addition to this quality of simplicity there was *force*. His discourses were characterised by living energy. Believing as he did the great doctrines of the Gospel, he could not be lukewarm or feeble in the presentation of them to his hearers. Say what men may, it is doctrine that moves the world. He who takes no pronounced attitude as to saving truth will not sway the human intellect nor move the human heart. Mr Thomas, like Mr Spurgeon, Dr Dale, and other great preachers, spoke with energy, with power, and with enthusiasm, because he profoundly believed in the great

truths to which he gave utterance. Behind all there was force of character, so that power seemed to stream out in all directions when he preached. In him there was united in a remarkable degree such opposite qualities as thoughtfulness and energy; so while his sermons never failed as intellectual productions, they always throbbed with robust life. Added to the qualities of simplicity and force, there was *beauty* in his discourses. That beauty was not mere ornamentation, but an innate and natural quality. Every sermon was a unit and a whole, and in conception and composition was a thing of beauty. It is obvious that he had formed a high ideal of a sermon, and that he constantly aimed at its realisation. His discourses were carefully and skilfully composed. Their structure and style were characteristic of the man, who was imaginative and poetical, and never wanting in good taste. The true, the orderly, and the beautiful always appealed to him, and it was painful to him to listen to a rambling and pointless discourse. The fact that divine influence is exerted in the conversion of souls is no reason for neglect in the presentation of truth, but to the contrary. There must be some adaptation in the means to secure that glorious end. Mr Thomas believed this, and acted accordingly. He gave of his best to this great work.

He was a truly *eloquent* preacher. He would commence his discourse deliberately, speaking slowly and quietly, but as he went on he rose to eloquence that was most powerful and sublime. As this has been referred to already, I need only say here that whether he studied eloquence as an art or not, he was master of a splendid style of oratory. It may have sprung from an intuition which came from the contact of a great nature with the greatest of all truths; for true eloquence is the product of ideas, and in order to attain it, all the faculties of the mind must be fully awakened and employed.

It was obvious that he threw his whole soul into his

sermon, and this made the whole discourse vivid and powerful. There was a fine combination of excellent qualities in him as a preacher; and even when he was not at his best he was always instructive, and well worth going a long distance to hear. He was not always in the *hwyl*, as we say; he had now and again a *cwrdd fflat* to his sorrow. He did not like "flat meetings." Who does? But on the whole he could be relied upon to shine in his pulpit exercises; and when he did shine, it was really glorious: the heavens seemed to be open, and the glory of the spiritual world streamed upon us with a splendour and brightness that can never be forgotten.

Time and space forbid me to make any detailed reference to his literary work in connection with the denominational publications, especially of *Seren Gomer*, of which periodical he was joint-editor for several years; or to his standing in his denomination, and the leading part he took in its development and movements. Let it suffice to state as a general fact that he filled a large place in his denomination in Wales, that he took an active part in all its work, and that he ably supported its institutions, such as the colleges, and the different societies connected with the Baptist Union. But it was as a *preacher* that he excelled. He gave himself heart and soul to this vocation; he magnified his office as a minister of the Word, and made it the one business of his life. It was in the pulpit that he shone most brightly, and it was here that he rendered his greatest service to his fellowmen. He preached sermons that will live for ever in the memory of those who heard them, and they will have a permanent influence on their life and destiny. I myself have good reason to be thankful to God for permitting me the great privilege of coming in contact with such a man, and of having heard him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. No one could come under his influence without being inspired and stimulated to higher things. The Pulpit of

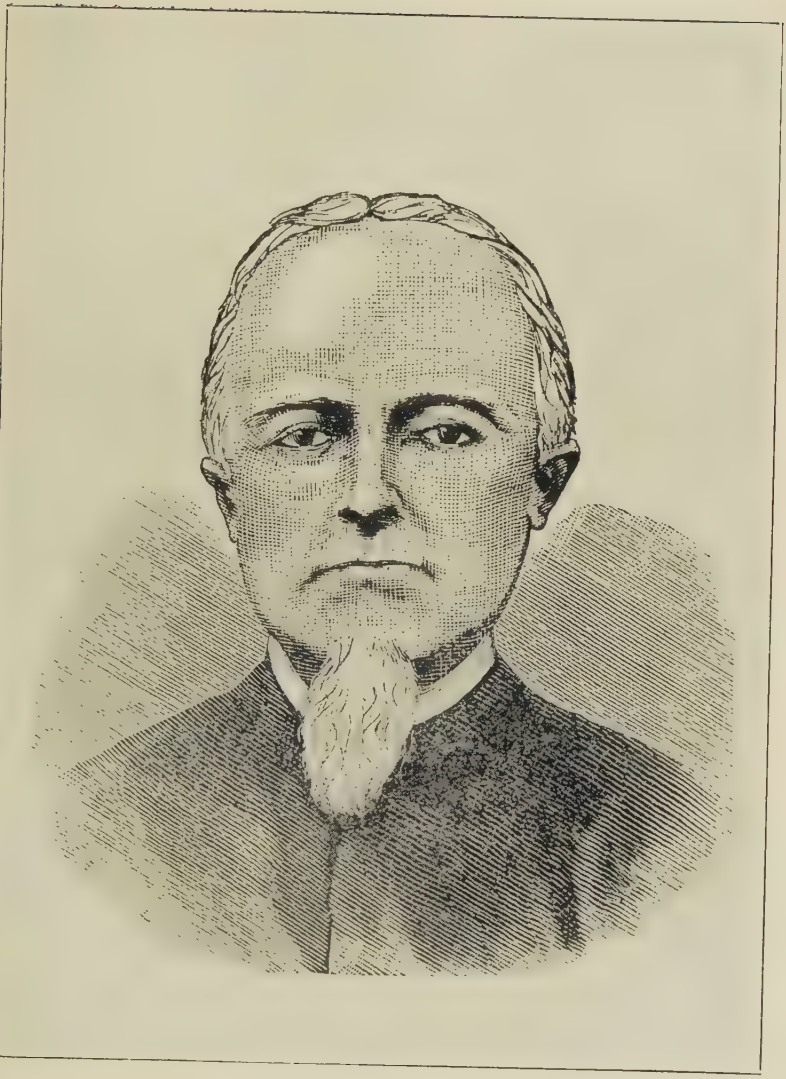
Wales is to-day richer, and its standard of preaching higher, owing to the fact that Evan Thomas lived to enrich and adorn it. He must be placed amongst those great and able men who have permanently benefited their race by their noble character, high achievements, and great services in the cause of truth and righteousness.

The Rev. JOHN JONES ("MATHETES")

By the Rev. DAVID POWELL, Liverpool

The Rev. John Jones, who was better known throughout Wales by his *nom de plume* "Mathetes," was born at Tanyrhelig, a small village near Newcastle-Emlyn, about the end of the year 1821. He was the first-born of Roger and Mary Jones. His father was one of those commonplace people who, though lacking individuality, contribute largely to the stability of a community. His mother was a woman of strong intellect and independent judgment. She was well versed in her Bible, the predominant Welsh Classic of that period, whatever may be said of other periods in the life of our nation. "Mathetes" was, on the intellectual side, unmistakably his mother's son.

He went for some time to school at Newcastle-Emlyn, and probably learnt imperfectly the three elementary rules. This, and the teaching of the Sunday School and the pulpit, and the home training, were the principal factors in his early education. We can scarcely say of him that the child was the father of the man, for he revealed few or none of those qualities which afterwards distinguished him and made him a Saul among the prophets. At the age of sixteen he was obliged to leave home to seek a living. He made his way to Dowlais, where he was employed as a miner in one of the pits. But he did not forget his mother. He tenderly cared for his mother and maintained her in comfort, though he himself had a large family and received but a small salary.



The Rev. JOHN JONES (Mathetes). [*To face p.* 174

In his new, and what may appear to the uninitiated, unpropitious environment, he became subject to new influences which stimulated him in the development of his intellectual and spiritual nature.

At Dowlais he regularly attended the services and the Sunday School at Caersalem Baptist chapel. The pastor of the church was the Rev. W. R. Davies, a popular preacher, full of fervour and enthusiasm, a commanding personality, and a man who exercised a mighty influence for good in the town and neighbourhood. "Mathetes" gratefully acknowledged his indebtedness to this good and noble man; and under the influence of his ministry he joined the church. About this time he was taken ill, and obliged to return home; and after his recovery he was baptized at Newcastle-Emlyn by the Rev. Timothy Thomas. Then he returned to Dowlais, and became a faithful and active member of Caersalem church.

The pastor and the leading members of the church encouraged him to exercise his gifts in public. He was not eloquent. His first attempts were rather feeble, but he proved himself a man of independent judgment. He detested stereotyped expressions and cant phrases. He could not imitate, and would not if he could. His strong individuality asserted itself at all times. He commenced preaching about the end of 1841. His first public discourse was delivered at Hirwaun. He did not spring gourd-like into fame "in a night." He was described by the majority as "a dry little preacher," which often means in Wales a preacher who speaks strong common sense; who gives utterance to the unvarnished truth that will make his hearers uncomfortable, but cannot be drowsy or heedless; who appeals more to the intellect and the conscience than to the sense of sound and to the emotions. "A dry preacher" does not mean the same to a Welshman as to an Englishman or a Scotchman. "Mathetes" could not be a dry preacher in

the English or Scotch sense; but to a section of the Welsh people who are passionately fond of intonation, imagination, description, and emotion, he was, and continued to be, a dry preacher.

He spent a short time at the Cardigan Grammar School preparing himself for the denominational College at Haverfordwest. He entered college in October or November 1843, where he spent nearly three years. He was a conscientious and hard-working student. The bent of his mind was towards philosophical and theological subjects, in which he was ever afterwards interested. He began to apply himself to literary work, and henceforth his pen was never idle. Three of his articles appeared in *Seren Gomer* for 1846, one on "Civil and Religious Liberty," a principle which he vigorously and efficiently championed throughout life.

Before the expiration of his last term at college, he was invited to undertake the pastorate of the Baptist church at Porthyrhyd, Carmarthenshire, where he was ordained 27th May 1846. Here he revealed all the excellent qualities which characterised his public life throughout and made him a mighty power wherever he went. He conscientiously prepared his sermons. He explained and applied the central truths of the Gospel, and denounced the sins of the age with prophetic ardour and honesty. His sermons were expository and doctrinal, and pre-eminently moral and practical. He threw himself with all the energy of his ardent nature into every branch of the work of the church, and especially of the Sunday School. He was a zealous temperance advocate and worker, and succeeded in banishing from the neighbourhood the degrading custom of illicit drinking or shebeening, which was then too common in Wales. He persuaded the publicans of Porthyrhyd to close their houses on Sundays. His very presence filled drunkards with awe. As he was a thorough believer in education,

his heart bled at seeing the children of Porthyrhyd without educational advantages. He set to work to provide a public school for the neighbourhood, and would have succeeded in his arduous task had he remained there a little longer. The scheme fell through when he removed to another and a larger sphere of labour. He was eminently successful and truly happy at Porthyrhyd. The church revived and increased under his ministry. He raised the Sunday School to a much higher standard of efficiency, purified the moral habits, sentiments, and tone of the neighbourhood. And he achieved this radical reformation in the short period of about two years and six months.

His next pastorate was Caersalem Newydd, near Swansea. There he found all the evils of Porthyrhyd intensified tenfold. Intemperance was the blighting curse of the neighbourhood. The drinking habits of the people encouraged shebeening, and shebeening caused increased drunkenness. Suppers, or what the Welsh called *pasteiod*, were provided at public and private houses for so much per head: these gatherings took place for the apparent purpose of assisting a poor widow or an incapacitated workman, but really to eat and drink. The *cwrw bach* and the *pastai* ended as a rule in drunken brawls and cruel fisticuffs. These gluttonous festivities and drunken orgies, with all their attendant evils, kindled "Mathetes's" zeal for sobriety and decency to a white heat. He concentrated his energies in order to exterminate the debasing customs from the neighbourhood. He mercilessly denounced them from the pulpit, at church meetings, and in public. No Elijah or John the Baptist denounced the sins of the people with greater vehemence or with holier indignation than he did. He had the double reward of the outspoken prophet. He aroused the hostility of both the victims of the evil habits, and of those who profited by them. He was derided and persecuted. However, though not

altogether before he left the place, he had the satisfaction of seeing his self-sacrificing efforts succeeding beyond, perhaps, his most sanguine expectations. The *cwrw bach* and the *pasteiod*, the drunken brawls and the fisticuffs, disappeared; the village became one of the most sober and orderly places in Wales; and the church was permeated by temperance principles, which flourish there unto this day. This, however, is only one feature of his work, though the most conspicuous, at Caersalem Newydd. He baptized many here, and among them some of the most notable characters of the place. He worked with the Sunday School and the young people, and encouraged them to study and think for themselves, with the result that there arose in the church an intelligent band of young men who took delight in reading and thinking. Here as well as at Porthyrhyd he exerted himself and sacrificed much to liquidate the heavy chapel debt, no easy task in a church of poor workmen.

After leaving Caersalem Newydd, Mathetes successively held pastorates at Newport, Monmouthshire; Llangollen and Llanfachraeth in North Wales; and Pyle, Glamorganshire. In each of these churches the general features of his work and influence were similar to what has been described, though shebeening was not one of the evils he had to combat. At Pyle he suffered seriously from an internal complaint; and in compliance with the earnest advice of an eminent physician, he broke his pledge of total abstinence. His extreme conscientiousness forbad him after this to be an uncompromising advocate of total abstinence, though he continued to denounce with his wonted zeal intemperance, habitual drinking, and the frequenting of public-houses. He saw nothing but evil in frequenting public-houses. It was an inestimable loss to the cause of total abstinence to be deprived of the whole-hearted advocacy of this redoubtable champion when almost at the zenith of his influence.

From Pyle he removed to Rhymney, Monmouthshire, to be the pastor of Penuel church. His ministry here commenced on 30th November 1862, when he was in the very prime of his life, and universally regarded as one of the ablest men of his denomination. Of all the spheres of his labour this was the most important. Here he had a large and an influential church of colliers and miners and their families, with the merest sprinkling of tradespeople. Among these hardy sons of toil were a few robust thinkers, who knew and understood their Bibles, and its most difficult books in particular.

Rhymney was in many respects a congenial sphere for "Mathetes." An important section of his congregation fully appreciated his thoughtful and practical discourses. His fame soon spread far and wide. "We shall hear the truth from Mr Jones," had become a proverb in the town and neighbourhood. He was not only the devoted pastor of his own church, but a leader in the literary, social, philanthropic, and political life of the district. Intelligent young men of all denominations came to him for instruction. During his ministry at Rhymney two great strikes occurred there causing untold misery. No one was more active or liberal on the relief committee; no one better acquainted with the life and necessities of the applicants. In 1871 and 1874 he was elected a member of the Bedwellty School Board, and in 1874 he was appointed vice-chairman. He led the Nonconformist section of the Board, and largely through his influence it became one of the most liberal and efficient School Boards in Wales.

At this time he removed to Briton Ferry to take charge of Salem church, which was comparatively weak, and burdened with a heavy debt. To clear the larger portion of this debt in a few months, he promised £50 on the condition that nineteen persons would promise to give or collect £50 each by the end of the year. The challenge

was accepted, and though the whole of the nineteen failed to realise their expectations, "Mathetes" ungrudgingly gave his £50, which to him was a large sum. Shortly after this he began to suffer from internal cancer. He was not aware of the nature of his complaint, and clung to the last to the hope and belief of his recovery. He lingered for months, and it was evident to all but himself that death was not far off. He had no desire to live for the sake of living, but in order to finish his work, and especially to complete his Biblical and Theological Dictionary. He died on 18th November 1878, and was buried at Pant Cemetery, Dowlais, highly honoured and deeply lamented.

This brief, and necessarily incomplete and imperfect, narration of "Mathetes's" life may assist those who are unacquainted with his history in forming their estimate of his character. It is no empty boast to state that Welsh Nonconformist ministers have been the leaders in the intellectual, social, political, moral, and spiritual advancement of the Principality. Nonconformists possess the highest ideal of life in all its relations and ramifications; their principles animate and stimulate them to realise their ideal; and in spite of the inherent imperfections of human nature and the formidable difficulties confronting them, their achievements in Wales are really wonderful.

I shall now endeavour to explain and illustrate from "Mathetes's" life and teaching the ideals and principles of Nonconformists in general, and of the Baptists in particular. Certainly there is a wide area wherein Conformists and Nonconformists, Roman Catholics and Protestants, agree; and whilst due prominence should be given to their differences, emphasis also should be laid on their concord. But my task now is to delineate "Mathetes's" ideals and principles, as they are explained and enforced in his teaching and exemplified in his life, and to illustrate thereby the ideals and principles of

Nonconformity, and of the Baptist wing of Nonconformity, irrespective of their agreement with, or difference from, the ideals and principles of other sections of the Christian Church. The materials for forming our opinion of "Mathetes's" teaching are plentiful. We have three large volumes of his Biblical and Theological Dictionary, containing altogether nearly 3,000 pages, and mostly written by him, and a volume of his sermons, published by himself. Nor can any one be in any doubt as to his meaning and teaching. He reiterates his ideals, principles, and opinions in different connections and forms, and never loses an opportunity of enforcing them. And he always means what he says, and says what he means. His whole nature would revolt against any juggling with words to hide his real convictions, or to mislead for any purpose his hearers or his readers. Honesty in words was as morally binding in his sight as honesty in other things, and he taught not only what he believed, but also what he exemplified in his life. His life was the best exposition of his teaching. There was neither affectation nor dissimulation in his character. I make no apology for giving prominence to what may appear elementary, because we are too apt to forget the elementary, which is, after all, the very foundation of life and character.

"Mathetes" was a firm believer in, and a strenuous defender of the supernatural and the miraculous. He could as well doubt his own existence as doubt the Incarnation, the Resurrection of Christ, His continued presence and incessant activity in His Church and in the world, and the inspiration of the Bible. The divine origin and nature of Christianity was to him a fundamental and indisputable truth. He believed with all his heart the teaching of the New Testament, that Christ was the only Saviour of the world; the only Head of the Church; the Alpha and Omega of creation; its origin, purpose, and explanation; in Whom all should trust; to Whom all

should submit; Whose word is irrevocable law, that cannot be set aside or altered in the least particular, either by individual caprice or by church authority.

As a corollary, "Mathetes" held, taught, and contended that we have in the New Testament, and in the New Testament only, the complete, the perfect, the infallible, the authoritative rule of faith and conduct. Christ's will is the Christian's law, and His will is fully, clearly, and unmistakably revealed in the New Testament. Our religious ideas and performances must be according to His revealed will, as we find it in the New Testament. Though "Mathetes" unreservedly admitted the infinite and incomprehensible mysteries of Christianity, he would not allow for a moment that Christ has left us in any doubt as to the meaning of His will with regard to Christian practices and conduct. With regard, for instance, to the mode and subjects of baptism, he contended that either the Baptists or Pædo-Baptists were in error. He applied the same principle to other points of radical difference between Christians. This is only the consistent application of one of the fundamental Protestant principles, any deviation from which inevitably weakens the Protestant stronghold.

With his implicit belief in Christianity as a supernatural religion, he firmly believed also in its rationality. He denied that faith and reason could be divorced, or that there was any antagonism between them. "Reason and faith," he says in one of his sermons, "are not antagonistic to each other, but they co-operate." In another sermon he says: "He that believes without understanding is not unlike the seed on the rock. A man who believes without knowledge is like a ship under sail, with little or no ballast. He is a kind of weathercock. As a rule, the understanding must be opened before the heart is won, or the will is bent. Those who comprehend the most are the firmest and the most constant with

religion." And again: "We are to believe, but not without knowing why. 'Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.'" He distinguishes between a fact and its comprehension. There are innumerable facts we either do not comprehend at all, or only partially comprehend. It would be irrational to deny facts because they are totally or partially incomprehensible. Further, even the nature of the fact can be known. We recognise a physical fact, a mental fact, a moral fact, a spiritual fact, a divine fact. If we set our reason at work we shall know that Christ is a real person, a unique character, a Divine Man. If we act on this rational knowledge and trust in Christ we shall know experimentally that Christ is all this and more. Thus Christianity from every point of view is rational, and appeals in every way to man's understanding, reason, and judgment. And once we know that Christ is Divine, reason will tell us we ought to obey Him in all things, though we may not at all times know the reason of His commands. It is reasonable for the lower reason to submit to the higher, the imperfect to the perfect, the human to the Divine. The sick man, though ignorant of the properties and the action of the medicine, obeys the physician. The sailor obeys his captain, though he may not understand the reason of the command. At Christ's word, and against all external probabilities of success, the disciples launched out into the deep, and let down their nets for a draught. Thus faith in obeying Christ in the presence of the highest improbabilities acts in harmony with the highest reason. But the circle of faith is larger than that of reason. It is deeper and higher than reason. It is the foundation and the crown of reason. It is the root and the fruit of reason. I give the substance, rather the form and words, of "Mathetes's" teaching and arguments. Believing as he did in the rationality of Christianity, we are not surprised to find him in sermon

after sermon urging his hearers to search, think, and study, in order that they may know, understand, realise, and act according to the truth. He compares a zealous, ignorant person to a spirited, blind horse, in constant danger of rushing over a precipice, and of dragging others after him. He gave greater prominence to the intellectual than the emotional in religion ; and I think preaching in Wales has always been much more intellectual than emotional. As a matter of fact, intellectuality has always been prominent in Welsh Nonconformity, as may be seen in its Sunday Schools, periodicals, and expository, doctrinal, and even philosophical sermons. The emotional is not the predominant feature in the typical Welsh character, nor is the typical Welshman an excitable, fickle creature, as he is sometimes represented by superficial observers and their credulous retailers.

The spiritual and the ethical received due prominence in "Mathetes's" preaching and writings. He urged that the material should be subordinated to the spiritual, and the temporal to the eternal. "Christ put the temporal under tribute to the spiritual, rather than make the eternal subordinate to the present." Religion should not be sacrificed to worldly advantages, or be used as a mere stepping-stone in order to attain any worldly position or honour. Religion must be the supreme arbiter of our life and destiny. We should contemplate and use our material blessings in a religious spirit. And the Christian's character ought to be an exact copy of his principles. His life should be a true expression of his faith. Faith and morality should never be divorced. "It is one of the most favourable tokens that the Christian eagerly desires heaven as a *holy* place, as well as a *happy* place. It is to be feared that the happiness of heaven is more attractive to many than its purity. We should think that the moral purity found there will be the root of its endless bliss. The necessary result of the removal of the disease is health ; and the

absence of corruption and wickedness, and the bliss of the great multitude, are synonymous expressions." Character as well as faith is infinitely more precious than all the wealth of the world. No one should sacrifice, or even endanger, his character for the sake of worldly advantages and pleasures. The preservation, the elevation, the sanctification, the perfection of character, should be a supreme concern with the Christian.

"Mathetes" regarded sacerdotalism and sacramentarianism as a corruption of Christianity. He maintained that no priest has any right to stand between the believer and his Lord. Such a priest is an impostor and usurper, without the right or the power to dispense pardon and give life everlasting. The believer must come into immediate relation with Christ in order that he may be saved and blessed with all spiritual blessings. No mediums, however essential, can save. Not even Christ's teaching can save. The personal Christ is the Saviour. And personal and immediate faith in Him as the Great High Priest and the Infinite and Eternal Atonement secures the divine salvation. And sacramentarianism is magic pure and simple, and is the negation of faith, and of spiritual and ethical religion. The two ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are symbolical, and the faith and obedience of the believer give to them their spiritual value. Apart from the faith of the believer, they are without any spiritual value and efficacy. Their object is to assist the believer to realise Christ, and not to be the magical channels of some magical influence. This principle of faith in relation to the Christian ordinances excludes Infant Baptism as well as sacramentarianism. It is, in "Mathetes's" opinion, unscriptural and unspiritual. It is in contravention of the teaching of the New Testament, and the negation of the necessity of faith in religion.

Inasmuch as all believers are without exception made kings and priests unto their God, all the members of the

Christian Church are essentially equal. As every other well-regulated and efficient society, it must have its ministers and officers; but the spirit of caste and autocracy and class distinctions is foreign to its genius. "Outside religious brotherhoods masters and servants are found, not in them. In our churches all are brothers and sisters. Every rich man is to leave his riches at the door of the place of worship, and the poor man is to leave his poverty in the same place. This principle is not observed in every church. Homage is occasionally, and perhaps often, paid to the 'gold ring.' Education, money, and high positions are serviceable; but the lead in the churches should not be given to men on account of these things, independently of other qualifications. A person may be 'a man of position' in society without deserving any special position in the Church of Christ. The godly are on an equality in their relation to the Saviour. No one is less than a brother. They differ greatly in many things, but not in their relation to Christ." Thus they are equal in their relation to Christ, and to each other in the Church of Christ.

The practical side of religion had a large and conspicuous place in "Mathetes's" preaching and teaching. No one believed more firmly than he in the doctrinal and intellectual aspect of religion, and in having an intelligent grasp of the great truths of Christianity. But intellectual truth apart from the practical life is worthless. The speculative without the moral is barren. Religion must sanctify and rule the entire life. The Christian should be truthful and just. His word ought to be his bond. He should apply his religion to his work and to his politics. Religion is not exclusively for man's spiritual nature, and a kind of lifeboat to take him to heaven. The Christian has a body to feed and clothe as well as a soul to sanctify. He is not spiritual enough whilst in this world to live without food. Religion has the promise

of this life and of the life to come. It is the Christian's duty to take care of his body as well as his soul; though the physical must always be in subordination to the spiritual. It is also the bounden duty of wealthy Christians to respect their poor brethren, and to assist them in their need.

Besides advocating the practical and simple life, "Mathetes" urged the people to live the strenuous life. Christ was a strenuous worker. He lived long in a short time. If we desire to live long in a short time we must do much good. The most eloquent speakers are often the most miserable workers. The active life is the serviceable life; and the value and the good influence of life arise from its service. An easy life is the parent of many errors. We gain strength by working. God's gifts are worthless unless we labour. So "Mathetes" urged the blessedness of work. His was the Gospel of labour. It is significant that in his volume of eighty-seven sermons he has not one sermon on *rest*. In work he would find his rest and peace. He could consistently and conscientiously preach the Gospel of labour. He often worked in his study from three or four o'clock in the morning till midnight. He was always working, and working efficiently and to a purpose. Perhaps if he had worked more moderately he would have lived longer and accomplished more, though he did the work of two long lives.

His sermons were full of light and heat. They illumined the mind and burned the heart. This summary fairly represents the teaching of the Welsh Baptist pulpit, and also, with the one exception of baptism, the teaching of the Welsh Nonconformist pulpit. Nonconformist ministers differ necessarily in the emphasis they lay on certain truths, and in the method and manner of presenting the truth. But it would not be an extravagant assertion to say that every Welsh Nonconformist minister gives due prominence in his preaching and teaching to

the foregoing doctrines and duties, and to the cognate doctrines and duties arising naturally from them. This is sometimes denied by anonymous writers in the Welsh Press. They accuse Nonconformist ministers of neglecting in their sermons the practical duties of life and religion. Every sermon by "Mathetes" is full of the practical, and he was in this a fair representative of the pulpit of his day. And it should be borne in mind that the pulpit is not the only place, or the principal place, where the Welsh Nonconformist minister can enforce practical Christian duties. He has the church society, wherein he can speak freely to the church members, and exhort, rebuke, and encourage them according to circumstances. The minister in the pulpit largely devotes himself to bring the unconverted and the disobedient to Christ. He devotes himself largely in the church society to the perfecting of the saints, yet in the pulpit he gives due prominence to the practical virtues and duties of religion. "Mathetes" prepared as carefully for the church society as for the pulpit; and one of the most intelligent of his church members told me he would rather lose his sermon in the pulpit than his address in the church meeting.

"Mathetes" was a doughty champion of religious liberty and equality. He believed that a State Church is necessarily inconsistent with religious liberty and equality; that it is essentially unjust and oppressive; that it belies the fundamental principles of a well-regulated commonwealth, and is antagonistic to the spirit of the Gospel. "Mathetes" never apologised for introducing into the pulpit the principles of religious liberty and equality, for they were to him divine and fundamental. Justice would not be done to his work and influence by passing over in silence the stand he took regarding religious education in Board schools. No one probably did more than he in excluding all religious teaching from the Board schools in Wales. He opposed Bible reading without note and comment in these

schools. He argued that, if the Bible were introduced into the schools, it should be explained as any other book, and that its mere reading was worse than useless. And if the Bible were explained in these schools, definite religious instruction would be given the children, and religious principles would be inculcated in which many, such as Unitarians, Jews, sceptics, and others, did not believe. This would logically lead to the most definite religious education in State schools. Once admit that the Bible should be taught in State schools, we cannot then deny the right to introduce sectarian teaching into these schools. But sectarian teaching by the State is a violation of one of the fundamental principles of a commonwealth. Moreover, only true Christians should teach the principles of Christianity. But any person with a good moral character, if he be otherwise qualified, can be a teacher in a State school. It is no business of the State to interfere with any man in religious matters. And wherever religious tests obtain, the State is apt to lose the services of the most conscientious and best qualified men, and of engaging in its service hypocritical and ill-qualified men. The State thus becomes the engine of hypocrisy, corruption, and inefficiency. These arguments are perfectly consistent with the fundamental principles of a true commonwealth, and of civil and religious liberty and equality. "Mathetes" was uncompromisingly logical and consistent. He scorned the idea of religious toleration as an insult. It was in his estimation as impious to tolerate man in his religion as to tolerate God to listen to his prayers. He demanded perfect religious equality without any religious tests and disqualifications in the State and State schools and establishments. He poured ridicule on those who called secular education Godless. If the schools where secular education only is imparted are Godless, so also are offices, shops, and workshops Godless which are opened and closed without any religious

exercises whatever. No one was more zealous for the religious instruction of the young than Mathetes. But he contended that it was the duty of the parents, and the churches, and religious teachers, to impart religious instruction, and not that of the State. So he fought and succeeded in excluding all religious teaching from the Bedwellty Board schools; and his advocacy of purely secular teaching in Board schools had immense influence in many parts of Wales.

"Mathetes" was one of the great preachers of Wales. In some respects he was unique. He was not one of the great *orators* of the Welsh pulpit. He could not sweep his congregation away by a flood of oratory, or soothe it as by a summer breeze. He seldom appealed to the emotions. He never attempted intonation, so pleasant to the Welsh musical ear. He studied what to say, but, as he regretfully confessed in addressing the students of one of our colleges, he never studied *how* to say it. Nevertheless, he was a fluent speaker. He never hesitated either for ideas or words to express them. He was always intensely earnest, and often impassionate. He spoke the truth emphatically and without fear. He would not jump over the hedge from his line of thought to please anybody. He would allow no person to embarass him in the faithful delivery of his message. He was no respecter of persons. Excessive frankness was his danger. But when he spoke one had to feel that a prophet of God was speaking. If he stirred not the tender emotions, he convinced the judgment. If he melted not the heart, he pierced the conscience. His sermons were brimful of matter, with abundance of telling points. The sermon would probably be better for the average hearer had it one-third of the points and matter. Though economical in other respects, he was extravagant in thoughts and ideas. But the weight of thought never became oppressive. It was relieved by the most

appropriate illustrations. Each sermon bristled with illustrations, directly appealing to the hearers. As a rule, they were homely, and sometimes quaint, but always fresh and telling. His printed sermons and his dictionary are rich mines of illustrations. His words were as goads, and as nails fastened by the master of assemblies. They pierced, stuck, and remained in the minds and memories of his hearers. It would be difficult to forget his sermons as to their subject-matter and particular points and remarks. And the most practical remarks were the most unforgettable. No one, for instance, who heard his sermon on "Little Sins" could ever forget it. One, ever after, saw small lies and small dishonesties growing into mountains of iniquity. He would often characterise a sin by a happy designation, such as Lotism, Rehoboamism, Cainism, and like names. He preached much in the churches of his own denomination in Wales, and his services were highly appreciated. But he was nowhere more appreciated than at home, and those who knew him best appreciated him the most. They knew he preached what he believed and practised.

His pen was prolific. As it has been already stated, he began writing to the Press when at college. During the earlier years of his ministry he competed much in the principal eisteddfodau, and was, as a rule, successful. "The Coal Field of South Wales," "The Geology of Wales," "The Mineral Resources of Wales," "Logic," "Under-ground Ventilation," "The Working Classes," and "Mental Culture," are a few of his prize essays. The adjudicators were eminent men. He contributed much to the denominational periodicals and papers. He was editor for some time of two of its monthlies. He was continually writing to the Welsh and English Press on religious, political, and local subjects. He was an excellent journalist, clear, logical, convincing, and sufficiently dogmatic and pugnacious to be arresting and interesting.

He was once offered a position, with a much larger salary than he had from the ministry, on the English Press. I have referred more than once to his excellent volume of sermons which is now difficult to procure. But his *magnum opus* is his "Biblical and Theological Dictionary, containing explanatory notes on words, persons, nations, customs, feasts, ceremonies, countries, rivers, animals, birds, and the principal doctrinal subjects of the Holy Scriptures." This is a comprehensive title, and yet it is inadequate unless the sub-title contains extra-Biblical and extra-theological subjects. He was for years preparing this dictionary, and died before fully completing it. He wrote the large majority of the articles, especially the most important. Of the nearly 3,000 pages, one would not be far wrong in saying that he is responsible for 2,500. His stamp is on them. One cannot fail to recognise him by his peculiar style, favourite expressions, analytical and argumentative power, distinctive ideas, and tendency to preach, or to turn everything to some practical purpose. His individuality and idiosyncrasies peep out through every article, however brief. It is doubtful whether he could conceal himself if he tried; but it is certain he would not try if he could. I cannot attempt here any detailed *critique* of this monumental work. I know of no other dictionary of its kind that is so unconventional and individualistic. The author throws himself into it, mind, heart, and spirit. On every page, almost, we recognise the diligent student, the strong thinker, the independent theologian, the robust philosopher, the keen debater, the practical teacher, and the ardent lover of truth. Much of its critical and scientific positions are now necessarily antiquated, but its principal articles are of permanent value, and will continue to be informing, invigorating, and inspiring. It has been and will be a great boon to Welsh students.

"Mathetes's" work and influence were many-sided. He

was one of the greatest forces of his denomination, and the streams of his influence continue to run strongly through its life. And through his denomination, his literary work and political activity, he exerted a purifying and ennobling influence on the life of the nation. He was a conscientious, transparent, courageous, and great man. He was invincible in defending truth and right. He was most sympathetic and tender to the weak and needy. He was a man of God, and a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Rev. ROBERT ELLIS ("CYNDDELW")

By the Rev. H. CERNYW WILLIAMS, of Corwen

THE question has often been asked and variously answered whether the town or the country be the place best adapted to nourish talent, and to develop the best that may be in a man. However, it may be stated that the majority of the eminent men in Wales, not only in the pulpit and the press, but also in other departments, were brought up in country districts. The shifting of the population from the country to the town is a serious matter, and is not altogether to our advantage. Probably it is not too much to say that whilst at the beginning of the nineteenth century two-thirds of the population lived in the country, at the close the reverse was the case, and only one-third lived in the country. It is urgent that the Government should adopt some means to bring the people back to the land.

On the 3rd of February 1812, the subject of my sketch was born in the parish of Llanrhaiadr, Montgomeryshire. The name of the old homestead was Tynymeini. His father's name was Robert Ellis, a native of Llanuwchllyn, Merioneth, a place famous in the annals of the Principality for the number of its public men. His mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Thomas, who was regarded as quite a character, and noted for shrewdness and humour. Her son inherited these qualities, and closely resembled his mother both in physique and strength of will. The father died when Robert Ellis was only four years old. This, combined with the fact that his mother was poor and

The Rev. R. Ellis (Cynddelw), Carnarvon.

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that the opportunities for education were so scanty, explains the backward state of Robert Ellis's education in his younger days. The elementary teachers of the time, especially in country districts, were men who had had but little training, and were expected to teach others more than they knew themselves. Though incapable of following any other occupation, they were deemed fit to open the door of knowledge to children of tender years. Possibly some of them knew not that they knew not, according to the Chinese proverb, and so were happy in their ignorance. It fell to their lot to shape the character of many of the nation's leaders at an important crisis in the history of our country. Robert Ellis was sent when quite a youth to work on some of the neighbouring farms, but he managed to obtain a few months' occasional tuition from some of the travelling teachers appointed by the trustees of Madame Bevan's fund, who made a tour of the country, and gave their services to several districts in rotation during the year. But in his pursuit of knowledge the subject of our sketch had several teachers. One of these was Richard Morris, who was fond of rhyme, and who taught him the Welsh bardic metres, and also gave him an insight into a new world of beauty and power. Robert Ellis himself had acquired the habit of close observation of natural objects, so that he was well acquainted with the various trees and flowers of the district, and also with the instincts and habits of animals and birds. Such knowledge proved very useful to him in after years, in providing him with appropriate and homely illustrations.

When twenty years of age he joined the Baptist Denomination, being baptized by the Rev. J. Roberts at Moelfre, near Llansilin, and shortly afterwards he began preaching. He spent nearly a year with the Rev. John Williams of Llansilin in preparation for the ministry. Mr Williams published a Welsh translation of the New

Testament from the original, entitled "The Living Oracles." He was a profound thinker and an eminent scholar. He was well adapted for the work of instructing and guiding young preachers, for he believed more in the "drawing out" than of the "pouring in" system in education. He was a man who set great value upon independent thinking, and he had the ability to stimulate his pupils, and to inspire them with the desire to strike out paths for themselves, rather than to be imitators of others. Ruskin said that hundreds can talk for every one that can think, and thousands can think for every one that can see. It is said that the great distinction of Dr Arnold of Rugby was not the amount of knowledge which he imparted to his pupils, but the amount of enthusiasm which he kindled in them. The same may be said of John Williams, who within his circle of influence did mighty work. His published discourses and lectures prove him to be a man far above the average, and the time has surely come when this great man should come to his own in the estimation of Welsh Nonconformity.

Mr Ellis held pastorates at Llanelian and Glynceiriog in Denbighshire, at Sirhowy in Monmouthshire, and in the county town of Carnarvon, where he was until his death, which took place at Gartheryr, Llanrhaiadr, on the 20th of August 1875. He was buried in accordance with his own expressed desire at Glynceiriog, the scene of his ministry for many years. He was twice married. His first wife was Miss Hannah Davies of Cynwyd, by whom he had several children. Three of the sons are now living—R. Ellis of Felinfoel, Llanelly, Dr Ellis of Cardiff, and Rev. R. Ellis, LL.D., of Llansannan. His second wife was Miss Ellis of Gartheryr.

Mr Ellis was a man little above the average in height. He had an intelligent and beaming countenance. For some years before his death he cultivated a long, flowing, white beard. He constantly wore a velvet cap, which

he reverently removed when engaged in public prayer. In some respects he bore a striking resemblance to Dr William Rees ("Hiraethog"), who, like himself, was a child of the mountain and a genius of the first order. He possessed a sanguine temperament, with a dash of the choleric, and he was far removed from the melancholic and the phlegmatic. Being optimistic in his view of men and things, he made the pessimist the subject of his ridicule. He was brimful of wit and humour, which enabled him to reap a harvest of fun and enjoyment in the most unlikely places, and from the most unpromising circumstances. At one time he accompanied his mother, who was a woman of large build, when she fell into the River Tanad. He was then but a mere boy. When, however, he was assured that no harm had befallen her, he burst out into laughter, and begged of her to come out, otherwise the small shallow river of Tanad would not be able to run on its course. When overtaken by a thunderstorm on Berwyn mountains, two friends who accompanied him were very uncomfortable, but he improved the situation by composing some impromptu stanzas for the entertainment of his moody companions, and when asked whether he was not wet through he replied in the negative, stating that the rain had not gone further than the skin. A collection of his witty sayings and retorts might fill a volume, and prove a source of much amusement.

Let a few instances suffice. Taking part in special preaching services at Rhos, Denbighshire, and which were very largely attended, was a minister of good standing, but unaccustomed to such large assemblies, and who was, therefore, rather nervous and excited, but Mr Ellis endeavoured to calm him, assuring him that it was all right, that the congregation, though numbering over a thousand, could only listen one by one.

On one occasion, after delivering a lecture on an

antiquarian subject relating to Wales, he was told of a man present who had not enjoyed the lecture, for the simple reason that he was ignorant of the subject, and the narrator said he thought the man should have been more interested on that account so as to acquire new information. "No," said Mr Ellis, "people do not want to listen to matters of which they know nothing, for that reveals their ignorance, but if you will say something which they previously know, and say it a little better than they can say it, they will pride themselves on their great cleverness, and extol you to the skies."

One woman, noted for her tendency to gossip and her restless tongue, was telling him one day: "It is strange, Mr Ellis, that one half of the world knows nothing what the other half is doing." "Quite true," Mr Ellis replied; "but no one can blame you on account of such ignorance."

It may be fairly asked what claims he has on our regard, and why should we place him *amongst the immortals.* In reply, we must point to his labour of love on behalf of his fellow-countrymen. A writer in the *Carnarvon Herald* spoke of him then at the time of his death:—

"For more than forty years he devoted his great energies, and powerful and physical and mental capacities, to the culture, elevation, and enrichment of the literature of his native country, secular and religious."

Mr Ellis was undoubtedly one of the hardest workers of the day. In his voluminous works, many of which are already published, others being ready for the press, "Cynddelw" has added to almost every branch of Welsh literature, in which he was a consummate master, and an acknowledged authority. Let us glance at his

Poetical Works.

Almost every Welshman who aspires to any position in the world of letters begins in dabbling in what he

fondly calls poetry. Though the word is often a misnomer, his thinking of it as such may be a harmless illusion which will soon be dissipated, or a dream from which the stern facts of life will wake him before long. Our subject when quite a youth became interested in the world of poetry. His environments were favourable to the cultivation of the muse. The Rev. Walter Davies ("Gwallter Mechain"), who was a poet of more than local repute, lived in the locality, and was an object of admiration by many, so that it became the ambition of young men of talent to excel as poets. The natural scenery was favourable. It has been remarked that those who are brought up under the shadow of a mountain more naturally develop the faculty of wonder; and if so, Mr Ellis had that advantage. However, the hills and mountains surrounding his native home, with their periods of storm and calm, with their rugged strength and native beauty, the babbling rills yearning for the ocean, the daisies and other homely flowers in the fields, "pilgrims both in nature's care," left an indelible impression on his mind, and their images were reproduced in his poems and sermons. When he entered the pulpit he had to forego, to a large extent, his career as a poet, and though he composed much, yet he had only his time of leisure to devote to the muse. The same may be said of many other Welsh poets, so different to the best known of English poets, who are able to give their whole time and undivided attention to the work. Our poet was fond of the rhythmic assonance so characteristic of Welsh poetry, and he sang mostly in the fetters of "cynghannedd." We firmly believe that Welsh poetry has suffered through the undue prominence which has been assigned to "cynghannedd." True, it has been the channel of many clear thoughts, noble passions, and forceful expressions, and is, moreover, very well adapted to the Welsh language; but it is too limited and insular

in its character, and may be sometimes a hindrance to thought.

Mr Ellis composed several odes of great length, and in some of them especially his powers of thought and expression are evident. His ode on the "Resurrection" proves that he was thoroughly possessed by the great subject, and so is able to captivate the heart of the reader.

Wordsworth argues that the object of the poet is to give immediate pleasure to a human being possessed of that information which may be expected of him. The way in which our poet speaks in images of glowing beauty of the great fact of the resurrection of our Saviour from the tomb of Joseph, and of the certainty of the future resurrection of his followers, has given pleasure to thousands of readers, many of whom have treasured some of the most expressive facts in their memory. But possibly "Cynddelw" shines to better advantage in the field of poetry in his ode to "Silence" and his poem ("cywydd") to "Berwyn." In the former he has given many truths in the form of proverbs, showing his deep knowledge of human nature, and in the latter he discovers not only his wide acquaintance with natural objects, but his love for them, showing that he could read their double meaning, being very different to Peter Bell in this matter, and in memory revisits the scene of his childhood, and calling in the aid of fancy, perhaps, rather than imagination, to reopen the gates of the lost paradise of youth, that he may revel again on the banks of the golden rivers which flow calmly through this delightful garden. His hymns are evangelical in sentiment and faultless in diction, but do not exhibit that force of passion and depth of feeling which are necessary to win the sympathy of fervent worshippers. His poetical works appeared in a volume published by the late Mr Hugh Humphreys of Carnarvon, to which is appended an essay in Welsh on "Cynddelw," the joint production of the Rev. J. Spinther

James, M.A., and the present writer, with a chapter on his preaching by the Rev. Charles Davies, now of Cardiff.

His Prose Works

When we come to think of his work as a prose-writer, we are at once surprised at his versatility and the quantity of his productions. He wrote several books on national antiquities and folklore, some on ecclesiastical antiquities, and he was particularly at home in theology and Biblical interpretation. He wrote a commentary on the New Testament, which was published in three volumes. He commenced this work in the early years of his ministry, and as the work came out in parts, and he went patiently and carefully over the field until shortly before his death, he wrote on the first chapters of the Book of Revelation. We can therefore trace the development of his mind, and the last part of the commentary is a vast improvement on the first. Biblical interpretation has made great strides of late, and he was not slow to profit by this improvement. A prominent feature of his work is the various readings given from Welsh and English authorities.

His biography of Dr Ellis Evans is a masterly composition, and is worthy of a foremost place amongst this class of literature. His first qualities shine conspicuously in the pages of this book—his idiomatic Welsh, his rich vocabulary, his wide observation, his retentive memory, his sympathy with truth and with purity in all its forms, his familiarity with Scripture, and his ability to use the most telling figurative expression, so that every page is alive, and the "Biography of Ellis Evans" is really one of the classics of our language. He also wrote a biography of his old tutor, the Rev. John Williams, and standing by itself this is a very excellent work, but compared to his former account of Dr Evans, it is certainly inferior. He was a constant contributor to the periodicals and encyclopædias of his lifetime, so that we stand amazed at the versatility

and ability of the man, and at his remarkable industry. His Welsh dictionary is a very creditable production, and has been of service to many.

The Preacher.

We come now to refer to him in his own particular sphere. He entered the pulpit when he was a young man, and he gave the rest of his life to the work of the ministry. His character throughout his career was altogether above suspicion, and he always regarded this as an essential qualification in any aspirant for the office. He was always very successful in his dealings with men, as he was of a kindly and a genial disposition, and beneath a playful surface were hidden depths of tenderness and great sympathy. Though this side of his character was not at once apparent to superficial observers, it was well known to his own immediate acquaintances. As a preacher he was always very substantial and instructive, giving evidence of having taken pains to master the subject in hand, and to bring it forth in the clearest light before his readers. For some years he was considered rather *infra dig.*, and he sometimes betrayed a lack of taste, and could provoke undue merriment in a portion of the congregation. He never paid much attention to the proper modulation of the voice, and his gestures were probably not of the order of Demosthenes or of Cicero. Still, after all deductions have been made, and every necessary limit has been assigned, he was a great preacher. He would be in full sympathy with his great theme, and would pour forth in torrents of words, in strong voice, and with great physical power, the truth that was in him, and sometimes he would rise to heights of eloquence attainable only to the real masters of assemblies. We remember a most remarkable sermon from him on "The First Resurrection," and his description of the spiritually dead in their graves—the spiritual sepulchre—struck all present with awe and

solemnity. His sermon on "The Atonement," preached before the Carnarvonshire Association, made such an impression on those who heard it, that he was requested to publish it, and he did so, and expanding it so far that it forms a neat little volume on this momentous subject. We could refer to several other sermons of great power which were delivered with marvellous effect.

During the last years of his life, especially, we felt that the whole personality was in the sermon—his judgment, his imagination, his memory, and his feeling. His popularity as a preacher grew with his advancing years, and his services were in great demand throughout the Principality, and he was justly reckoned as standing in the front rank of the great preachers of Wales. He suffered much domestic affliction during the last few years of his life, but his nature gave forth sweeter music like the Æolian harp through the biting winds. "The artists," says Emerson, "must be sacrificed to their art. Like the bees, they must put their lives in the sting they give." Times of sorrow produce psalms of praise and hymns of thanksgiving. As it was said of Macaulay, so we may say of "Cynddelw," that when he died, he carried away with him a world of information and knowledge; but we fain believe that he found some use for them on the other side, and his character and work remain as an inspiration and an incentive to labour to us who follow. He entered into rest, and his end was peace.

The Rev. W. REES, D.D. ("HIRAETHOG")

A REFORMER

By the Rev. D. ADAMS, B.A., Liverpool

I

The Rev. William Rees, D.D., better known to his countrymen by his bardic name, "Hiraethog," was acknowledged by all who knew him to be a man of rare genius.

We are often told that genius in whatever sphere it may be exercised is an inborn power, indefinable, if not unaccountable. This may be partly true. Logicians remind us that we can only define and describe what is common to many individuals of the same species. The peculiarity of any one individual remains indefinable. We can only say that the quality which differentiates it is peculiar or unique. We must ultimately, so it is said, rest satisfied with saying that the rational and spiritual life of humanity assumed such and such a form in the individual referred to. Others, of a more pious turn of mind, would put it that "God willed that such a man should be endowed with such and such extraordinary powers. No other explanation can be given, or need be asked." All this may be quite true as to the source of the uniqueness characteristic of men of genius. But we are often able to point out some of the many rivulets that run into the main stream. In other words, we can ascertain many of the ancillary forces which together help to partly account for the characteristics of the man, and the superior excellence of his productions.

The Rev. WILLIAM REES, D.D. (HIRAETHOG). [*To face p.* 204

William Rees was born at a farmhouse called "Chwibren Isaf," in the parish of Llansannan, County of Denbigh, on the 6th of November 1802. On his mother's side, he was descended from Hedd Molwynog — one of the fifteen Royal Tribes of Gwynedd. Whatever honour is associated with such a princely origin, or whatever benefit he might indirectly derive from such a high-born ancestry, he can justly claim.

His grandfather hailed from Llandilo, Carmarthenshire, and was stationed in the neighbourhood of Llansannan as an excise officer, and eventually married Gwen Llwyd, the heiress of Chwibren. May we not be allowed to hazard the fancy that the connection of William Rees with both North and South Wales was a most appropriate coincidence, if not symbolic of the national greatness of the hero whom the whole of Wales claimed as a common property and owned as a national leader?

Means of education, in the present ordinary meaning of the term, were denied him in the early days, owing to lack of good schools in his immediate neighbourhood. But he was brought up in a pious home, and was daily educated by the prayers and virtuous lives of Christian parents. His father, David Rees, was subject at times to fits of depression, amounting almost to melancholy. But he was, in spite of all this, a man of deep piety, and strong convictions as a Nonconformist. When he was about to die, he called his relatives to his bedside, and there enjoined them not to leave his remains in the parish churchyard, but to bury him near the Llansannan Methodist chapel, where his soul used to worship his God. Does not this incident partly account for his son's repugnance to state-governed religion and his zeal on behalf of the Disestablishment Movement? His mother also was a woman of strong character and unquestioned piety. Her last words to her two sons, Henry and William, were very

characteristic of her own life, "Take care of your time; mind your side, and be sure of your points." With these glimpses into the character of both his parents, we can more clearly understand the life, the spirit, and the writings of "Hiraethog" himself.

In addition to his wise and pious parents, his best teachers were his daily toil on the farm and his own pious watchings as shepherd of the sheep grazing on Hiraethog hills. His silent and meditative communion with Nature in winter and summer on the hills, and the inspiration of the charming beauty of the Vale of Aled, assisted in the education of his latent powers and in the development of his many-sided genius.

It is useless to speculate what "Hiraethog" would have become had he enjoyed a college or a university training. He would, doubtless, have been a very different man, but whether of greater influence for good on his own and future generations may be doubtful.

He himself recognised Divine Wisdom in the kind of training he did receive as the most appropriate one to prepare him for his life's work. And he utilised to the utmost the experience he gained as a shepherd, and the hardships of a farmer's life in that age. What Midian and its shepherding was to Moses, and what the hills of Bethlehem proved to David as a preparation for their respective future ministries, that were his hard-won experiences as a shepherd-farmer to "Hiraethog." Apart from them we can scarcely explain his profound sympathy with the oppressed, and his consuming zeal for social and political reforms. He "was cradled into poetry by wrong, and learnt in suffering what he taught" as a reformer in after years. As might be expected, there were few books to be had at Chwibren, or any other country farmhouse at that time. Though "Hiraethog" mentions a few volumes of secular literature which he early read, he was pre-eminently the reader of one book—the Bible. The well-

known maxim, "Beware of the man of one book," was fully exemplified in his case.

He refers in later years with satisfaction to this scarcity which compelled him, as it were, to read his Bible more thoroughly than he otherwise would have done. As it was, he devoured the whole contents of it. Ever after during his public life it was the quarry out of which he dug the stones of his doctrinal temple. Its verses, treasured in his capacious memory, formed his quiver out of which he drew the arrows which he aimed so deftly in his warfare against error, oppression, and sin.

Thus he went on in a quiet and humble manner as a shepherd-farmer until the year 1828. He had for some years previously been a follower of the muse of poetry. It was difficult for a man of his temperament, and surrounded as he was with traditions of Tudur Aled and Gruffydd Hiraethog, not to feel the stirrings of poetry within him. It was that year, however, that saw the dawn of his reputation as a poet at an Eisteddfod held that year at Brecon. "Hiraethog" won the prize and the silver medal offered for a poem ("cywydd") on "The naval victory at Trafalgar and the death of Nelson." Was it this, I wonder, that opened the eyes of his friends and neighbours to the fact that a possible preacher, as well as a possible poet, resided in their midst? However that may be, we find that his fellow-members at the Llansannan Congregational church pressed him at that time to exercise his gifts as a preacher. Having complied, he soon convinced all who heard him that a prophet from God had made his appearance in that sequestered spot.

His gifts were at once fully appreciated, and his services eagerly sought after by neighbouring churches. As Byron once said of himself, it may also be applied to "Hiraethog," "He awoke one morning and found himself famous."

A star of the first magnitude had suddenly appeared,

and immediately attracted the gaze of the churches far and wide.

In 1831 he accepted a call from the Mostyn Congregational church, and his ordination services took place on the 19th and 20th of April the following year. Thus the year of the Reform Bill witnessed the ordination of one whose ministry in the pulpit, on the platform, and by means of the Press, proved one of the greatest reforming forces Wales ever experienced. It will be our aim, in what remains of this essay, to substantiate the above statement by giving instances of his work as a moral, social, and political reformer.

II

He is now installed as a Christian minister engaged in the arduous labour of cultivating the moral and spiritual nature of his fellow-men, instead of cultivating the soil of Chwibren or Caedu, Llansannan.

In one of his poems, he humorously compares his trying experience as a shepherd on Hiraethog hills and his still more trying difficulties as a shepherd of the souls of men. But he succeeded eminently in his public ministry as a preacher, though he often deputed to Mrs Rees much of his pastoral duties. No verbal description can ever give an adequate conception to the reader of the pulpit oratory of any of our great preachers. The eloquence of "Hiraethog," it is confessed by all who heard him, baffles description. His dramatic power made every scene described by him live for ever in one's memory. He clothed all the dry bones of historic statements of fact with flesh and blood, and by his poetic imagination made them speak and act before us.

His familiarity with the Scriptures, his knowledge of human nature, his command of a pure Welsh diction, his

fund of humour, the fervour of his passion for righteousness, and his intense hatred of oppression and sin, combined to make his oratory incomparable.

In many respects he stood easily first in eloquence of a dramatic character, whether as a lecturer or as a preacher of the Gospel. This is not the exaggerated eulogy of a blind admirer, but a simple statement of an acknowledged fact. My chief object in mentioning the pre-eminence of his oratory was to emphasise its importance as a point of vantage to Dr Rees as a reformer. His popularity ensured for him a larger audience and greater influence. His commanding genius added weight to his journalistic work which a less gifted man could never acquire. His reputation as a poet and preacher offered him a commanding position for his artillery in the war on behalf of truth and righteousness and freedom for the oppressed.

Theologically, Dr Rees may not have been a very "advanced" thinker, or a very revolutionary reformer. Should that be the case, he would not be an exception, but rather a conformer, with the general rule. How often we observe that political Radicals and social innovators are endeavouring to compensate for these supposed heresies by theological orthodoxy! Or do they think that theology is a transparent sphere crystallised into a permanent form, whereas other truths appear in the form of bulbs which have to develop gradually until the flower and the fruit appear?

However, we find Dr Rees fully embracing the supposed Protestant dogma of the inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures. But it is evident that he at times felt the yoke heavy. He found it difficult to harmonise the early teaching of parts of the Bible with some scientific truths he believed in. He eventually disengaged himself from the trammels of Biblical literalness in his exposition of the account of creation given in the book of Genesis.

But in discussing the theological doctrines of pre-

destination and election which appeared in *Y Dysgedydd*, 1863-4, we find him too much influenced in his views by the *words* of Scripture, and too little comparatively by *the Christian consciousness* as taught by the Holy Spirit. But as it often happens in the history of doctrinal changes, his moral nature rebelled against supposed inferences drawn from the words of Scripture by Calvinists of a certain type. He tries hard to maintain a belief in the personal responsibility of every man, without letting go his grasp of the supposed dogma of the unconditionally free election of only some men to salvation in Christ. The depression of spirit which preceded his father's "conversion" may have rendered his own mind uneasy on this question of election. His poor father had been in the agony of despair for weeks fearing he was not of the number of the elect, and so without the possibility of being saved, do what he might.

The Jewish Sabbatarian views of some of his old co-religionists had occasioned a "split" in the Llansannan Calvinistic Methodist church. The excommunication of one Joseph Davies, Llys Aled, for walking over the hills from Cerrigydruidion home on Sunday morning to see his wife, who had been reported dying, ought to have staggered the advocates of adherence to the letter of Scripture. "What cruel inhumanity breeds in the religious mind!" "Hiraethog," who was a church member at the time, took sides with the more tolerant party who, he thought, acted more in accordance with New Testament teaching as to the observance of the Day of Rest. "The Sabbath," so Jesus taught, "was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." This incident ought to have opened the minds of all to the error of maintaining the equal value, as inspired Revelation, of every part of Scripture.

But against the hitherto accepted orthodoxy of his age he stoutly maintained the universality, as it was called, of the Atonement made by Christ. He clearly saw, and tried

to expose, the inconsistency, if not the insincerity of offering salvation to all men, whilst maintaining at the same time that no provision was made in the Atonement for the forgiveness of any except the elect. It is somewhat pitiful to notice the shifts, the quibbling, the playing fast and loose with moral principles, that are exhibited by those Calvinists when compelled to face these questions. Believing as they do in the one article of belief, that is, in the election of the few, and wishing in the depths of their human hearts to offer salvation to all, they find themselves between Scylla and Charybdis, the rock of supposed revealed truth on the one hand, and the whirlpool of their hearts, yearning on the other.

"Hiraethog," however, early in his ministry escaped the danger of moral shipwreck by casting overboard the dogma of an atonement confined only to the elect. He boldly maintained the universality and all-sufficiency of the reconciliation made by Christ, and thus laid a foundation for a Gospel broad enough to welcome the whole world to share in its blessings. With the courage of a reformer, and the zeal of a propagandist, he identified himself with what was then disparagingly called the "New School," which upheld what is known as the "Governmental Theory." This view maintained that the sufferings and death of Christ were a satisfaction to God as the moral ruler of mankind. The atoning death on the Cross of Calvary cleared the way, as it were, for the forgiveness of all repentant sinners, without imperilling in the least the august authority of God's justice as a ruler.

This "New School" caused much grief and perplexity to the old Calvinists in Wales, and they immediately undertook to utter their fulminations against it as a dangerous heresy.

"Hiraethog" came in for a good share of the obloquy. His enemies, so it seems, were watching for an opportunity to brand him with heresy. It soon came.

"Hiraethog" had preached on several public occasions a sermon on the part played by the Holy Spirit in the conversion of unbelievers. In this sermon he maintained, amongst other things, that the Holy Spirit made use of means, especially the Word of God or the Scripture, to effect this. This was apparently a very reasonable view to take. But the old orthodox school held that every conversion was effected by the spirit directly and without any instrumentality whatever. In self-defence, "Hiraethog" had to publish the sermon in order to show that he was misrepresented, and that there was no foundation whatever for the suspicion of heresy ascribed to him.

On the whole, he remained a moderate Calvinist to the end. Theologically he can be best described as a Whig rather than as a Radical.

He was doubtless true to himself and perfectly loyal to the truth as perceived by him. But even men of genius have their limitations. That he kept an open mind on most questions, reflects credit on him and deserves our sincerest praise. It is not what we believe as much as our forbearing attitude towards those who differ from us that entitles us to respect as Christian thinkers.

III

Dr Rees left Mostyn and settled at Denbigh in the year 1837 to take charge of the Congregational church meeting at Swan Lane. His popularity as a preacher increased rapidly during his Denbigh ministry. His services were in much request, both as a lecturer and as a preacher. It was during his stay here that he wrote and published his essay on "Natural and Revealed Religion." The chief aim of the work was to show the insufficiency of Nature as a revelation of the character of God, and the absolute necessity of a supernatural revelation such as we have in our Bible. The volume

is a wonderful production when we consider the previous educational disadvantages of the author. It proves that he had read largely and was fully acquainted with the literature of the subject. He never depreciates the teachings of Nature, but only shows their inadequacy. The one blemish of the work, unavoidable at the time, is his non-recognition of revelation in the Bible as a progressive process.

In May 1843 we find him in Liverpool as the successor of his dearest friend, the Rev. W. Williams, better known as Williams of Wern, whose memoir he had just written, and in whose memory he composed one of the finest threnodies in the Welsh language. In tender touches nothing he ever wrote surpasses it.

He commenced his Liverpool ministry on the first Sunday in May, and the greenness and beauty and growth of spring characterised his life and services there. He threw out fresh shoots in all directions. Though now settled in an English town, his heart was still fondly lingering in his dearest Wales. He fully sympathised with his suffering fellow-countrymen. He knew instances enough of the oppression and greed of the landlords, the bigotry of the clergy, their persecuting zeal, and their blighting influence on the squires. And alas! he was doubly pained by the ignorance and consequent indifference of the majority of the Nonconformists of the land. He was now in birth-throes for the political renascence of Wales.

In order to effect this he conceived the plan of starting a Welsh newspaper to enlighten and rouse his drowsy countrymen. He was one of the first Welshmen to recognise the all-powerful influence of the newspaper Press on the social and political condition of a country. He knew the tremendous power wielded by editors and leader-writers in England and elsewhere. He bewailed the lack of such power in Wales, and determined to the

best of his ability, and at whatever sacrifice, to remedy this defect. It was with this end in view that he, in conjunction with his friend Mr John Jones, printer, Castle Street, Liverpool, started *Yr Amserau* in August 1843.

Some may possibly express surprise that a Christian minister just settled in a large town, with much preaching and pastoral work awaiting him, should at the very commencement burden himself with the additional labour of editing a newspaper! May we not suggest that the surprise and suspicion of unwise and ill-placed enthusiasm on his part arises from a too narrow conception of the work and mission of a Christian minister? He is not merely, or chiefly, a priest to properly administer sacraments and to conduct ritual services. He is certainly a priest in the sense of one who represents the holiness of God and intercedes before Him on behalf of sinful humanity. But he is also a prophet, the representative of God's righteousness. He is also a public teacher sent by God to proclaim the important truth that it is righteousness that exalteth a nation. He has to remind rulers and priests as well, that God "hateth oppression as a burnt offering." He has to raise his voice against tyranny in high places, and to warn all that the service of man is always the most acceptable service of God. Mr W. T. Stead is reported to have once said that he believed that St Paul himself, had he lived in England to-day, would have become editor of a daily newspaper. "Hiraethog" would doubtlessly have endorsed that view. In his address to the readers in the first issue of *Yr Amserau* he writes :—

"It is certain that the world will never be purified and reformed until the Press is first purified and reformed. In order to effect this the Christian Church must, by earnest prayer and sacrifice, take possession of it."

We hardly yet, as Christians, realise how potent a factor for good or for evil the editor of a newspaper proves himself to be. It is creditable to the foresight of Dr Rees that he did fully realise this some sixty years ago. And with this consciousness he determined to use the editor's pen for the furtherance of social and political reforms, upon the securing of which he foresaw the welfare of Wales depended. But high aims are not of themselves a sufficient security for their own attainment. The editor and publisher of *Yr Amserau* found to their disappointment that the reading public in Wales was hardly ready as yet to appreciate their self-denying services on its behalf. It is one of the most painful results of oppression and slavery that they check, if not uproot, the desire for freedom. Too often the oppressed are reduced to a comatose state of apathy and indifference to their own condition. The farmers and the working class in North Wales were verging towards that dangerous condition when *Yr Amserau* was started. Its circulation only amounted to four hundred. After a period of six months the publisher, seeing that he was losing money on every issue, decided to discontinue it. The editor, however, wished him to try the experiment for a little longer, stating, as an incentive to this, that he had in his mind a plan, the adoption of which, haply, might increase the circulation. The plan adopted was to print a letter in the dialect of his native county and purporting to have been written by an "Old Farmer," who freely expressed his opinions on current topics. The device succeeded admirably. These letters revealed a new power of humour and playful fancy in the author, and struck a new chord in the hearts of farmers and of readers in general which continues to vibrate to-day. The circulation rapidly and steadily increased, and the success of the enterprise was assured. On reading over afresh these letters of "'Rhen Ffarmwr," which have since

been collected and published in book form by the late Isaac Foulkes of Liverpool, one is forcibly struck by the political foresight of their author and his fervid patriotism. Unfortunately, they are quite untranslatable owing to their patois. We must consequently rest satisfied with giving a brief *résumé* of their contents.

The burning questions of the day were the following: The Abolition of the Corn Laws; Elementary Education; the Abolition of Church Rates, and the Disestablishment Agitation just started by Edward Miall and a few others; and the Oxford Movement, or Anglican Romanism. The "Old farmer" discusses every one of these topics in his homely fashion, but enriched by practical wisdom and enlivened by his sparkling humour. In his reference, for instance, to the Corn Laws, he clearly sees, and wished his fellow-farmers to see, that these oppressive laws were upheld by the landlords in order to keep up the rents. He further concedes that in the transition from Protection to Free Trade, many of the farmers might temporarily suffer owing to a reduction in the price of wheat. But he also takes care to warn them that the true remedy is not protective duties on foreign corn, but *the lowering of rents on the part of the landlords*. And in order to secure this, he presses the farmers to form themselves into a union, defensive and offensive, to demand and protect their just rights. In another letter he taunts the farmers that they are less united or less brave in defence of their rights than any other class. Artisans, he reminds them, have already formed trades unions, but the poor timid farmer tolerates the grossest injustice rather than incur the displeasure of his landlord. In another letter he condemns the custom which was becoming too common in those days, and has since been dangerously on the increase, namely, joining two or three small holdings together to form one large farm. The plan was defended from the point of view of the political economists of the day, and it was immediately

advantageous to any landlord who might be either unable or unwilling to spend any capital on farm-buildings. But the system has resulted in driving the rural population into the towns. This is the main cause of the over-crowding of our cities, and has given rise to the thorny problem of the unemployed.

"Hiraethog," to the credit of his intellect and his heart be it said, foresaw thus early the inevitable result of such a system, and thundered against it in *Yr Amserau* with all the might of his moral indignation. As might be expected, the "Old Farmer" was the sworn enemy of the Game Laws, which furnished amusement and profit also to the owners of the land at the expense of the cultivators. He would not defend poaching, but he justly maintained that those who fed the game should feed on them. He relates a most amusing incident of his appearance before the magistrates at Denbigh for killing a hare. He spoke his mind to them to their faces in such a bold, defiant manner that the Court let him off with paying for the warrant. But, like Socrates of old in Athens, he twitted his judges that, instead of ordering him to pay for the warrant, they ought to pay him his expenses for appearing before them in obedience to their summons.

As a real statesman, he shows constructive power as well. For instance, he maintains that the prime condition of efficient farming is to take care to farm the minds and to cultivate the moral natures of the youths of the land. Instead of wasting their leisure, as they too often did, in idleness or in the public-houses, he would have reading rooms established and public libraries opened in every country village.

The instances mentioned, and others that might be added, fully justify our contention that he shows wonderful foresight as a political and social reformer. He has anticipated most of the reforms passed subsequently by our legislators. His prophetic insight enabled him thus

early to see what justice demanded, and what the misery of the country would sooner or later make imperative. He thus did pioneer work for years, and his only reward was the usual renumeration of the prophet, namely, the hatred of the oppressor, and too often, alas! the indifference of those whom he tried to benefit. Now that we in Wales are reaping what he and others sowed long ago, let us do him the justice of acknowledging the debt, and feel grateful to him at any rate. During the years he edited *Yr Amserau* he did more than any other individual for Liberalism in Wales by presenting political questions in a highly interesting way, and thereby creating in the people a taste for politics.

IV

In those years, from 1847 onwards, elementary education convulsed Wales. Unavoidably, and at any rate unfortunately, opinions even of Nonconformists were very divided on the question. The Report of the three Education Commissioners, published in 1847, caused a great deal of indignation on the part of Nonconformists and all patriotic Welshmen. Welsh youths were vilified as being the most unchaste in the kingdom. Adult Welshmen were accused of being ignorant, perjured, and intemperate. The two panaceas for all these evils were (*a*) Education and (*b*) a return to the folds of the Established Church. Whilst in self-defence "Hiraethog" and other patriotic Nonconformists proved from Government statistics the falseness of the charge of being more deeply sunk in unchastity than any other portion of the United Kingdom, they at the same time granted that means of education were sadly lacking in most neighbourhoods. But whilst all agreed to deplore the ignorance of our children, they differed as to the best means of remedying the evil or of meeting the deficiency.

Then, as in our days, the "religious difficulty" was the greatest stumbling block in their way. All agreed that no scheme of education was complete which excluded the moral and religious training of the children. Then came the question—was education to be state-aided or not? Those whose desire for education was stronger than their attachment to the essential principle of Nonconformity answered—Yes. Those again who valued Nonconformist consistency higher than any state aid, though used in support of education, answered—No.

For these Nonconformist stalwarts education must be religious, but supported only by voluntary contributions. For educationalists pure and simple, education may be state-aided if the religious instruction be Biblical only. So Nonconformists saw themselves in a tight corner, and could not agree as to the best way to extricate themselves. As far as we can find out, no one suggested secular instruction only by the state-paid teachers, and the religious teaching given by voluntaryists before or after the regular school hours.

"Hiraethog" maintained that Nonconformists had better not soil their hands with Government grants in aid of their schools. Of course, he did this as a Nonconformist who believed that the teaching given was to be religious. But he could not see any consistency in refusing tithes for teaching religion on Sundays and accepting grants for teaching religion on week-days. He stoutly averred that Nonconformists would commit suicide by accepting Government money. "If," he says, "our leaders turn traitors to the principles they loudly profess, there will be an end of their influence for good, for the community can never trust them any more." His counsel, however, was not followed. Government grants were accepted by the managers of British and Wesleyan schools. But it was the beginning of sorrow for Protestant Nonconformity, and has doubtlessly retarded the progress of the movement

in favour of the Disestablishment of the Church of England. Had Nonconformists acted consistently then, they would have escaped many of the troubles that have since overtaken them.

In the present Education controversy how often we have been taunted with our inconsistency. If the root-principle of Nonconformity is wrong, the sooner we confess it and join the Establishment the better. But if Nonconformists are right in maintaining that the Christian religion should not be controlled by the State or be state-aided, then also let us have faith in that truth and advocate secular instruction only by state-paid teachers, and religious instruction only by the churches which undertake to give it, but always at their own expense.

"Hiraethog" gave out no uncertain sound on this question in *Yr Amserau*. But the counsels of other leaders prevailed, and with what results let the last Education Act and the Defaulting Act answer. Had "Hiraethog" lived now, he would, we feel sure, have unhesitatingly joined the Passive Resistance Movement. "Hiraethog" had thoroughly followed the history of the Papacy in Europe, and he abhorred her for her oppression, her superstition, her immorality, and her wicked subserviency to kings and other rulers. Knowing this, it is no wonder that he despised the weak imitation of Popery which characterised, in his opinion, the Oxford Movement. He is very hard on these Newmanites and Puseyites, as they were subsequently known, because of their Romeward tendency. Like most evangelicals in the Church of England, and Nonconformists outside the pale of the Church, "Hiraethog" was virulent in his denunciation of the movement. We hold no brief either to defend or condemn this Anglican Movement. But we are inclined to believe that many of their critics became their traducers because they were blinded by their hatred of Roman Catholicism. In some respects they failed to do

justice to the movement. Whatever the motives of the promoters, and this we hardly can sit in judgment on, the result has proved a real Revival in the English Church. We Nonconformists have something to learn from them, if it were only to value more highly the æsthetic side of religion.

"Hiraethog" always championed the cause of the weak and the oppressed. He was always like Dante, one "Who loved well because he hated." It was with the intention of exciting greater interest in the Slave Question, and to educate public opinion in respect of their sufferings in the United States, that he introduced "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to his fellow-countrymen. He made a young man, whom he named James Harries, read and translate the book to Uncle Robert and his wife, Elin, who lived in Hafod y Ceiliogwydd. Aunt Elin was a very pious old lady, but Uncle Robert was not a church member. The old Adam had not been dethroned in his heart. As a natural man, untouched by Christian forgiveness, but ruled by his natural indignation against cruelty, he indulged in freely cursing the slaveholders. This plan enabled "Hiraethog" to look at slavery from different points of view. Uncle Robert, as a non-Christian, but full of the milk of human kindness, simply abhorred the cruelty exercised towards the poor slaves, and if he had his own way would give short shrift to all slaveholders Aunt Elin as a pious Christian, believing, as she did, in the over-ruling Providence of God, deprecated any feeling of revenge, and counselled patience and trust in God who would Himself providentially interfere to put an end to this inhuman traffic in flesh and blood. There is not the slightest doubt that this free translation into Welsh of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" powerfully influenced the Nonconformists of Wales to support the North and Negro emancipation, when England, unfortunately, sympathised with the Southern States at the time of the Civil War.

To the credit of his humanity and his Christianity, he was also untouched by false patriotism, and refused to allow it to blind his judgment as to the justice of the Crimean War. When most Nonconformist ministers even had caught the war fever, the editor of *Yr Amserau* was sound enough in heart and head to question its justice, and to blame England and France for their support of the cruel Turk. This shows the soundness of his political judgment. Most statesmen in our day would confess that the war was a great blunder, if not a great crime, on the part of England. But at the time, the editor of *Yr Amserau*, Mr Henry Richard, Mr Eleazar Roberts, and a few others, were the only public voices that were raised against this disastrous and costly Crimean War.

His sympathy was intense with Hungary in its efforts to throw off the oppressive and cruel yoke of Austria. He wrote often in *Yr Amserau* on this subject, and always dipped his pen in the hottest indignation his heart contained. He fulminated against the oppressor and succeeded in rousing the whole of Wales, its high and low, to utter their protest. Petitions were forwarded to our Parliament asking the Government to use its influence in favour of the oppressed Hungarians, and to order their Austrian oppressor, in the name of enraged humanity, to stay its gory hand.

Kossuth's secretary and another Hungarian gentleman were sent as a deputation to thank "Hiraethog" for his valuable services in *Yr Amserau* on behalf of their fellow-countrymen. This gave great gratification to the editor, and in referring to the incident years after he made the following comment: "I had never received a penny for my labour for years as editor of *Yr Amserau*, and I never expected any pecuniary remuneration for the toil and anxiety; but if no money came to my pocket, I received that day what I valued more than a thousand

pounds, were they put in my hands, namely, the blessing of an entire nation helped from perishing partly through the influence of my writings."

If any man deserved the name of the friend of the oppressed and hater of the oppressor, "Hiraethog" did.

It was in the same spirit of intense hatred of cruel Italian princes, and of the worse rule of the Pope in Italy, that he championed the cause of Italian Independence. His whole heart went out in sympathy with Mazzini, Garibaldi, and other Italian patriots, in their efforts to secure their country's freedom from foreign and papal yokes. He continually wrote in *Yr Amserau* in support of Italian Independence. Mazzini corresponded with him, and expressed his thanks to him for using his influence on behalf of Italy. "Esteemed as you are by your countrymen, and lecturing as you do to large audiences, you can and will do a great deal of good to our national cause." So writes Mazzini to him in one of his letters.

"Hiraethog" took especial interest in European history during the revolutionary year 1848, and prepared a popular lecture on the subject, which he delivered in several places. He delighted in thinking of it as heralding a new era in the history of Europe and the civilised world. The revolutions in almost every continental country were a manifest proof, not only of oppression and suffering, but also of the determination of the people to throw off, if possible, the yoke of their oppressors. "Hiraethog" might, in his desire for liberty and righteousness, have been too sanguine in his anticipations.

In the might of his faith in the justice of the cause of the people, he too much ignored the might of the false loyalty given undeservedly to kings. He might have been too fanciful in his explanation of the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. But he was right in his opinion that these uprisings of the oppressed subjects were God's

writing on the walls of king's palaces, that tyranny stood condemned, and its days numbered.

Thus for many a year, he continued to lead the politics of Wales in the paths of righteousness, peace, and freedom.

On Sundays he preached the Gospel of the righteous Fatherhood of God and the righteous love of man, whilst in his capacity of editor, writer, and lecturer, he applied these principles to the policy of governors, and the duties of their subjects. His noble descent from kingly ancestors made him the friend of order and authority. But his Christianity and his broad humanity taught him that such order and government can only be maintained on the condition of due freedom and justice conceded to the subjects of such rulers.

Much might be said of "Hiraethog" as a lecturer. He was a pioneer in this method of instructing his fellow-countrymen. He lectured on astronomy, geology, the European Revolutions of 1848, on Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation, and on Williams Pantycelyn and his hymns. It was he, by his mastery of his subjects, by his natural humour and commanding eloquence, that made the public lecture a popular institution in Wales. Other imitators followed, whose ambition for fame or profit was stronger than their ability or eloquence, and whose humour deteriorated into funny anecdotes, if not buffoonery. As a result, the lecture has lost the popularity it enjoyed in his hands. However, he made it respectable, and kept it honoured to the end of his career. And it is difficult to over-estimate the influence of his lectures in creating interest in the subjects they dealt with, and in popularising the lecture as a means of instruction. Many Welshmen owe their introduction to many studies to the interest created by his lectures.

Thus did he go on labouring for the political emancipation and the social amelioration of his dear Wales. He

must have taxed his time and his energies to the utmost before he could have accomplished so much journalistic and literary work. And we must remember that all this extra work was not allowed to impair his efficiency as a minister, or to diminish in the least his popularity as a preacher.

He must have possessed Herculean powers, both physical and mental, to be able to continue to do all this for so many years. When we remind the reader that all his journalistic and editorial work was done without any pecuniary remuneration whatever, we must rank him as one of the most self-sacrificing benefactors Wales ever had. He burnt "the midnight oil" incessantly, because the fire of his patriotic love for his country's weal ever burnt within his bosom. He was descended, as we have already pointed out, from one of the warrior chiefs of Gwynedd, and in the same chivalrous spirit he went forward with a courageous heart, and with the sword of truth and righteousness in his right hand, to fight error and injustice, ever the worst enemies of his native land's welfare. He was always a fighter, and took pleasure in championing the cause of the oppressed in every land.

And all this secular work, one exclaims in surprise, was done by a minister of the Gospel! Certainly; and chiefly because he was a minister to preach the Gospel of "peace among men who are well disposed" towards one another, as well as the Gospel of God's love and His peace resting on all who follow after the righteousness that is in Christ.

It was from the Hebrew prophets, and the life of Jesus Christ, and the teaching of His apostles, that "Hiraethog" derived his inspiration as a reformer and preacher alike. It was the love of Christ, who was sent "to set free the captives and to open the eyes of the blind," that constrained him also to use his talents to liberate the captives of oppressive landlords, and to open the eyes of farmers and labourers to see their rights and strive to possess them.

Most of the leaders of Wales in the past were ministers of the Gospel. The connection between their ministerial and their political labour was causal and vital. They were reformers, because they were believers in the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. They, in this way, illustrate the true and necessary relation between religion and the State, between Christianity and the politics of a nation. The principles of the Christian religion are in their opinion to leaven the legislation, commerce, and industry of the people. We maintain in addition that the so-called political and social work of these leaders of Nonconformist Wales greatly increased the influence and efficiency of their preaching. People saw that these men who preached the Gospel on Sundays tried their best to apply it to the every-day life of the nation. They witnessed the self-sacrifice which proved the sincerity of their convictions. The preaching of St Paul, when labouring in Corinth, was more successful because men saw him working hard every day as a weaver to support himself. Our Nonconformist fathers worked hard without much recognition in any way, and scarcely any pecuniary recognition. But they succeeded thereby to convince the people of their own earnest sincerity, and of the power of the Gospel to produce self-sacrificing love in those who believed it. Thus was Wales won over from indifference to religion, and from immorality to a life of earnest piety. Wales was led forward by men who gave practical illustration of the Gospel of the Cross by carrying every day the cross of self-sacrificing love on behalf of their fellow-men.

Space and opportunity forbid me to write at any length on "Hiraethog" as a poet, and on the influence of his poetry on the literary life and religious thought of Wales. During his lifetime he stood easily first amongst a number of eminent contemporary Welsh poets. Possessing as he did such large-heartedness and tenderness, it is

no wonder that he was a poet of the first magnitude. He only competed a few times for eisteddfodic prizes, and in those instances he was very fortunate. He was awarded the chair prize at the Madoc Eisteddfod of 1852 for his ode on "Peace." But most of his poetry was the product of inward inspiration, without any added stimulus from eisteddfodic honours. His masterpiece, "Immanuel," is written in blank verse, and though containing some of the highest products of his genius, it has not yet proved as popular as his many admirers wish. Whatever the cause may be, it has not hitherto been widely read and sufficiently appreciated. But one of his hymns has lately become a favourite in Revival meetings:

"Dyma gariad fel y moroedd," etc.;

and Wales has done thereby some little reparation for its comparative neglect of him as a poet. May we not look upon this as a prophecy of a revival of the popularity of his poetry in the near future? But the inspiration of the self-sacrificing labours of his life continues to breathe encouragement to the present age, and will, we feel sure, continue to stimulate future generations of patriotic Welshmen. The number of friends who knew him personally and had benefited by his preaching, or had enjoyed his entertaining conversation, are becoming fewer every year. But we sincerely trust, and hopefully anticipate, that the number of those who revere his memory for his patriotic labours on behalf of Wales will continually increase. "No good ever dies." May all who labour and deny themselves for the sake of others, confidingly trust in its truth. And as long as Wales enjoys the "good," which he was one of the chief means of obtaining for her, may her sons and daughters ever gratefully remember "Hiraethog," the manifold gift of whose genius was sacredly offered on the altar of his country's welfare.

The Rev. E. HERBER EVANS, D.D., Carnarvon

By The Rev. W. JUSTIN EVANS, London

Until these last few years, almost the only leaders of the Welsh people have been found among their preachers. The outstanding names among them have been those of their great preachers. These have made the best part of Welsh history. The pulpit has been the teacher in literature, in morals, and in politics. Hence religion has been the recreation, the pleasure, the educator, and the motive force in the life of the people. Lately, to the advantage of all, educated laymen have joined the preachers in the instruction of the nation. One cannot approve of the preaching of party politics from the pulpit; but, after all, truth is indivisible. Religion cannot be kept in special compartments of human life, and be ruled out of others. One must vote as one prays, or one prays to no effect. Politics are poor without the love of God, and religion is impossible without the love of man. "I fight about drains," said Father Dolling, "because I believe in the Incarnation." He was right. The believer in Jesus Christ should be willing to fight and work for drains and anything else that tends to benefit the men and women Jesus Christ loves, and came to save. There is no fear the pulpit will ever lose any of its legitimate influence so long as it keeps moderate, unselfish, and Christian. For ages it has won and kept the confidence of the people of Wales by making the cause of the people its own, striving to lift and enlighten them by means of the truth.

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The prophets of Wales have sprung from the people themselves, and have known from personal experience the grievances, difficulties, and trials of the common people. The cry has come, not from a distance, but from the crowd. We are thankful to know that the greatest forces of our country have for ages been the spiritual. The prophet has done more for us than the priest or the statesman. They have been most honoured who have thought the deepest, who have prayed the best, and who have lifted men nearest God.

Among the leaders for about thirty years of the Victorian Era, one of the most prominent was Evan Herber Evans. Early in life he came to the front, and he kept his place there unto the very last. His strength was shown not only by the height of his flight, but also by its continuance. Most men work their way gradually to the front, but Herber showed at his first appearance in the pulpit that he was worthy of a place among the mightiest. While he was yet a student at college, he was invited to succeed one of the finest preachers Wales has produced in our day—Thomas Jones. Libanus, Morriston, was one of the largest and most influential churches in the country. To fail there, would have been to fail in sight of the whole of Wales; to succeed there was success indeed. Herber's success was undoubted, and almost phenomenal. He was called to most of the great meetings and open-air gatherings of his denomination. It was a difficult, if not dangerous, position for so young a man. Many have found it impossible to keep up such prominence. After a few years of painful efforts, they have succumbed to the inevitable fall. They have fallen fast and fallen far. Like Samson of old, they did wonders once, but the Spirit of the Lord has departed from them, and, alas, they knew it not. They have failed, perhaps, without knowing why they have failed. They have been left behind, and are every day wondering why.

Herber had many splendid qualifications for the leadership of men in the pulpit—a fine presence, a splendid voice, strong and musical; an unfailing understanding of a congregation, and great tact. He had a kind of personal magnetism that moved an audience into an expectant attitude even before he began to speak. There was a something in him that won the confidence of an audience at once. He somehow had the power of getting on good terms with the people he addressed.

As to preaching, he was an enthusiast. In fact, he could do nothing by halves. Whatever he undertook to do, he did it as well as it was in his power to do it. He threw his whole being into everything. As Bishop Westcott truly said, "A youth without enthusiasm means a maturity without faith and an old age without hope." Herber had a passion for preaching—for preaching Christ. He preached because he believed. He was free from all form of cant. He did not, like some, whine in the pulpit. He opened his mouth and spoke in a manly way.

He aimed at reaching and moving men. For this he studied carefully and constantly. As we have already seen, Nature had given him many advantages. These advantages he improved. Native fluency tempt some to indolence. Their advantages become to them a snare and a disadvantage. They trust to the melody of their voice, and their sermons become all sound, sweet, perhaps, but empty. Herber made the most of all he had, and added to them. He was full of life, as one said—full of quicksilver. He could not even rest. Churches are empty because of the dead men in the pulpit. People are asleep in the pews because they are addressed by preachers who are only half awake themselves. To keep people lively you must yourself be alive. Betterton, the actor, said the players would soon empty the theatres if they spake like some preachers. Why should actors be more earnest about amusing people than ministers

about saving them. Real preaching is not only worth living for, but is worth living one's best for. Throughout life Herber worked very hard—few knew how hard—to deserve the attention and confidence of his hearers. He took great pains to perfect himself in the art of speaking. He never gave what cost him little, but always the very best he had. He knew how to respect his hearers, and was ready to take infinite pains, even with the smaller parts of his work. He refused to appear unprepared before the smallest audiences. I have often watched with some surprise and amusement the anxiety which possessed him for hours before delivering a short speech at a prayer meeting of twenty or thirty people, in a country chapel. He did not wait for a great occasion to do his best, but did his best to make every occasion great. His addresses were not all equally good: they were all equally his best at the time. In fact, he never trifled with his Master's work, but always gave beaten oil for the use of the sanctuary. He counted his Lord worthy of his utmost effort, and he willingly gave it. Only the best is good enough for Him.

If a minister is lazy, and unwilling to pin himself down to severe mental labour, you may feel sure his sin will find him out—so will his hearers after a while. No class of people have more temptations to indolence; none have more inducements to do their utmost. A lazy man is hateful anywhere, but is most hateful in the pulpit. A careless pastor means juiceless, powerless sermons, and that means lost souls as the result. Constant labour, as well as unceasing prayer, is the price that is to be paid for power. No preacher can continue fresh and interesting in the pulpit without working, studying, praying out of it. Excellence is found only on top of a steep hill, and means climbing, toiling, sweating, to reach it. Cheap success is poor stuff. The great preachers have all been hard workers. Some stupidly talk as if they only had to go

to the pulpit and trust the Spirit to give them the words to say. We have heard some of them, and feel sure the Holy Spirit never gave them the stuff they gave us. If not *afraid*, they should be *ashamed* to ascribe such sermons to the Holy Ghost. Herber trusted the Spirit to help him do his best. He went about with his pulpit spectacles on, and was always gathering materials for his sermons. He used everything and everybody. He was always up-to-date, and often quoted the day's newspaper, if it could anyhow help him. If he preached an old sermon—which he would often do, away from home—it was an old one *born anew*. The body was old, but the spirit was new.

By doing his best every time, his best became still better. He improved upon himself, so that his to-days were never duplicates of his yesterdays, but were an advance upon them. He kept growing unto the very end, because he kept learning every day—drinking from an ever-flowing stream. He could not afford to stagnate, for he had taught the people to expect great things from him. He seldom disappointed the expectations he himself had created. His mind was never put to bed to sleep, so he never had sleepy hearers in the pew. He was ever filling, that he might be ever giving. He was ever learning, that he might be ever teaching.

At first, his eloquence was like a torrent that carried everything before it; later on, it became more quiet, but was perhaps more powerful in all the essentials of true preaching. The thunder gave way to the lightning. He was acknowledged to be, by those best qualified to judge, one of the finest orators and best talkers his country has ever known. Dr Robertson Nicoll, writing in the *British Weekly*, says: "For sheer subduing, overwhelming eloquence, Dr Herber Evans is unequalled by any living preacher." Mr Spurgeon, speaking after him at Exeter Hall, said: "It is a serious thing to follow a man with

two such tongues." Thomas Jones testified that "Herber is the greatest orator Wales has ever produced." Mr Elvet Lewis, in his charming biography, writes of him: "His was a spirit redolent of nature and adorned of grace: finding his sphere, if haply such there may be, among the Chrysostoms of the ages." Mr Ossian Davies says of him: "To know Dr Herber Evans was to love him. Taking him all round, he was the most eloquent Welsh pulpit orator of his day. When in the *hwyl* he could sway an audience of 12,000 people just as the north wind sways the pines on the bleak Norwegian heights. His sunny face was a sermon, his voice was a fortune, and his eyes were the home of genius. He was a typical Welshman—quick, impulsive, emotional, impressionable, and generous to a fault. He was a big, honest, innocent child-man, and we all admired and loved him. Nothing could be better than Dr Evans at his best in the Welsh language. I have heard Spurgeon, and Parker, and Bunshon, but none of them could thrill my soul like my old friend Herber, when all the breezes were in his favour. That glorious voice of his fairly gripped the heart, and his grand oratorical flights moved our inmost soul. Alas! Wales has not yet found his successor! What a generous soul he was! His personal kindness to me during my student days will never be forgotten. The poorer ministers of North Wales owe him a debt which they can never pay. He was a 'big brother' to us all. A tenderer heart than his never throbbed in a human breast." Principal Fairbairn of Oxford, after Herber's death, wrote: "There was no man Wales could less spare, no man whose death would be a heavier loss to our churches, not only in the Principality, but throughout England. We looked to him as one who could speak the thing he believed with the strength of independence and honest conviction. He was genial and tender, the very soul of radiant happiness and humour. I used to

feel that he was a comfort to look at and to think of."

When Herber was a young man he was a draper's assistant, and was very clever at the difficult art of dressing windows so as to attract the attention of passers-by. When he entered the ministry he consecrated this art to the service of Christ. He knew how to show his goods, how to dress his window. Some preachers utterly fail in this. They have splendid materials, but they do not know how to show them. They have great truths, but they cannot make them attractive. They have good meat, but spoil it in the cooking. They are like tradesmen who bundle their goods anyhow into the window, and no one comes in to buy. Others, who have a smaller and perhaps a poorer stock, know better how to display what they have, and make a better market. Herber always strove for good stuff; but, in any case, he put it well before the people. He could so dress his window that every article looked its best. By a simple and appropriate anecdote he would bring down the house. By an old truth in a new dress he would surprise and delight an audience. No doubt his early business training helped him in knowing men and women, and also in understanding the force of their trials and temptations. This knowledge of real life is lacking in many public teachers. The academy will not make up for the practical experience of the market-place. We must strive to shorten the distance between the pulpit and the pew.

While some ministers are too stiff, others are too limp. While one must have a backbone, it must be a backbone that can bend. One can be approachable without losing any dignity. To be interesting to men you must be interested in men. No doubt Herber touched the popular heart as few did. Some of those who failed to do so retorted by saying that he was popular because he was not deep. They complained that *they* did not get

their deserts — perhaps they were lucky they did not. They lacked the two essential things—tact and contact. They did not know men, and they did not know how to touch men. Herber knew men as well as books. His sermons were full of "words which the heart knows," and abounded in illustrations, sentences that were bright, sharp, and memorable. He was fond of surprises and of the unexpected.

His style of preaching at first was so fresh and original that it led to some opposition and sharp criticism. It was an innovation if not a revolution. Some mistook his clearness for shallowness, as they mistook their own muddy sentences for depth. They forgot that a preacher's first duty is to make himself understood. For this the choicest words of the market and the street are better than the technical language of the academy. Nearly all the great words are words of one syllable. He did not despise sanctified humour, nor did he neglect the use of parable and anecdote. For this he was once severely attacked in a series of caustic, and, of course, anonymous articles, entitled "Herberiana." Though they were an unmeant compliment to his power and originality, Herber was annoyed by them. His annoyance would have become indignation had he known that the writer who thus stabbed him in the dark was a neighbouring Congregational minister who professed to be a friend and admirer. These foolish attacks did not sour Herber's spirit, nor did they diminish in the slightest degree his popularity in the country. He had made himself a necessity. The people who had heard him wanted to hear him again.

Though he could touch the deepest emotions, and make the hardest-hearted to weep, he was generally bright, cheerful, and hopeful, stirring his hearers to trust in God, even in darkest days. Some preachers are doleful and sad, taking the heart out of everybody. They shut

up all the windows that open towards the sunrise. They pine and whine, they moan and mope, as if they had no Gospel, no good news for men. They dwell in thick clouds, and darkness is all around them. Their doctrines are all soaked in vinegar and wormwood. They ought to take a sun-bath before they enter the pulpit, and should sing a dozen of the longest psalms before they begin to preach. Herber was bright and jubilant, a preacher of real good news. He strove to make men glad—glad that they were loved of God, and were allowed the honour of loving and serving God. He never tried to win notoriety by airing new views and preaching heterodox doctrines. His harp had two strings — the love and righteousness of God; upon these he played sweetly and strongly for forty years, and from these he seldom failed to extract music that drew sinners away from sin, and saints nearer to God. There is hardly a Congregational chapel throughout Wales, be it large or small, where thronged congregations have not heard with delight and gratitude that sweet harp of his.

Herber's very appearance on a platform, or in the pulpit, created a feeling of pleasure in the audience that knew him. He generally began with a stroke of humour, for he felt the importance of being at home with his hearers. He took off the stiffness, shook off the starch, with a laugh or a smile. Then he felt he *had* them, and could lead them where he liked.

The story is well known of the old miller at Pencader. He was partly prejudiced against the preacher at first, but Herber soon carried away the prejudice in the sweep of his great eloquence. He was preaching out on the field at ten o'clock. Very soon the old miller lost himself in the enjoyment of the sermon. The preacher also was having a good time, and was like an inspired prophet telling the wonders of God's love to men. During the delivery of the sermon a heavy shower of rain fell on the

congregation, but the old miller knew nothing of the rain. When the sermon was ended, and he had time to come to himself, to his great astonishment he found his new suit of clothes quite wet through. He asked excitedly: "Who has been splashing water on my clothes?" He was not aware, as one has said, that the God of Nature had been raining upon his body while the God of Grace had been distilling His gracious blessing on his soul.

Herber was not so prominent on the platform of the eisteddfod as some of his brethren in the ministry. He never, I think, competed in either prose or poetry. But he valued the national institution as a festival that was characteristic of the people, and as a helper of native talent. He sometimes presided at these national festivals, and often delivered addresses at them. Acting as chairman at an eisteddfod in the Pavilion at Carnarvon he said: "We in the Principality feel that our old national institution has done so much in the discovery of men that it needs no longer any apology for its existence. The fact that it has been here, adjudicating its chairs, from the chair of Urien Rheged to the present day—here, cultivating and developing the poetry and literature of our nation—here, I say, elevating the people socially, intellectually, and morally—is a sound proof that there is true life in the eisteddfod. It has lived too long for us to go cap in hand to our Saxon critics to entreat them not to sneer at, not to ridicule our old institution. . . . Why! the eisteddfod has outlived hundreds of institutions highly patronised by our critics, and this year it is more likely to prolong its long existence than ever. . . . Let us then have no more apologising, but rather let us go on and do our own work, let us improve and perfect this old national tribunal, and make it more able to meet the wants of the present day. Let us make it a power that will tell more and more upon our children, and upon our country. . . . It is very certain that all the

hundreds who compete cannot all win the prizes, but some one has said that, 'It is only in pursuing the best that is beyond us that we can find the best that is in us.' All cannot win here, but the one who loses has possibly found the best that is in him, and has struck a vein that may be worked with great profit for a lifetime. 'Know thyself.' This is an heritage that no Jacob can take away from any one of you. It is quite possible that losing the prize on an occasion like this may teach you a lesson that will be a thousand times more precious than any prize. . . . We should more and more use the eisteddfod to develop and encourage the talent of our young men and maidens. Whenever we find a young person of unquestionable talent or genius, let us take him by the hand and encourage him —help him on. Let young people know that they can expect this help from us. This will incite them on, and at the same time make them the faithful children of the eisteddfod. For my own part, I think too many speeches have been delivered in times gone by to prove that such and such an eminent person was a Welshman. Why, I would not give three rows of pins in order to prove that the greatest man that ever trod God's earth was a Welshman—if he himself wished to deny it. We must also throw ourselves heart and soul into the education movement. If we only make the same advance in education as we have already made in morals, we shall find our Scotch and English friends occasionally studying their pedigree to see whether their old grandmother had not some Welsh blood in her veins. People claim relationship only with the worthy. . . . An English author admits that his nation has a dangerous way of trying to improve everything off the face of the earth except himself. We are determined not to be improved out of the way—we believe we are wanted here, but we wish to improve ourselves onward and upward. . . . Our country is often spoken of as 'Poor Wales,' but Wales is not poor. Who can

calculate the coal resources of our mountains, and there are hills of slate all around us. Who that thinks of the vast amount of mineral wealth scattered throughout the Principality, can ever again use the inaccurate term, 'Poor Wales'! Why! it is the richest spot of country in the British Empire. As these riches of our hills and mountains were once hidden out of sight, so now there is a mental wealth yet undeveloped in the children of our land—we only want the proper appliances to bring them out. . . . We are children of the mountains, and the inhabitants of mountainous regions are always remarkable for their love of their country. Illustrations need not be adduced, for what child even does not know of the ancient bravery of hilly Greece and the modern sturdiness of Alpine Switzerland? Above all, how deep was the love of the Jew for his mountain homeland. How sorely the captives wept when their harps were hung by the rivers of Babylon; for they remembered the far-away hills of Zion, of Tabor, of Carmel, and of Hermon. We also love these hills, with their sweet and sad recollections. The past is still an actuality with us; its power over our imagination makes this country a land of romance. We love its music—sweet and sad; it comes with a wonderful pathos to our hearts, so that while it grieves, it also soothes us. It seems to flow plaintively from the far-away past, and to come to us as broken sobs from our old poets and singers. Every spot of this Welsh Wales is endeared to us by its past history and its old associations—all full of poetry. We can throw our hearts easily into one of the last songs of Mynyddog.

"'Pam na chaf finnau ddweyd am dro,
Fy anwyl, hen, hen Gymru.

"'Mae hen feddrodau yno fyrdd
Yn cuddio hen wroniaid,
A symledd pur hen dyweirch gwyrdd
Uwch llwch yr hen ffyddloniaid;

Ond crefydd bur, a rhin, a moes
Hen Gymru sy'n y graian,
Sy'n ieuanc byth o oes i oes,
'Run fath â Duw ei hunan.'"

For some few years Herber lectured much throughout the country on such subjects as "David Livingstone" and "Oliver Cromwell." In this way he could teach truths of history and patriotism that would hardly be appropriate in the sermon. He was a hero-worshipper, but he selected his heroes. The Rev. William Pierce of Northampton, who was then a member of Herber's church at Carnarvon, tells us how he felt on first hearing one of these lectures—"It was the greatest oratorical triumph I ever witnessed. Some of us had been dubious of his success as a lecturer, so that the triumph was all the more wonderful to us. There were many like myself who could render no intelligible account of themselves during much of the latter part of the lecture: all I know was that we found ourselves at the close standing on the seat, waving what first came to hand, in a perfect rapture of delight." These lectures were no doubt a splendid inspiration to thousands in all parts of England and Wales. For a time they were delivered north and south, east and west; but they cost too much to the lecturer. His health broke down under the continuous strain. He had to take rest for nearly two years. He was a soldier who hated barrack life; to remain inactive was a sore trial to him, for he loved work rather than rest. During these years of enforced wanderings in the wilderness, he no doubt learnt many precious lessons, but he was impatient to get back to his pulpit. To his own great joy, and to the joy of his thousand friends, he was restored. He did some of his best work after his recovery, but the old *abandon* of his earlier years was gone. He seemed afraid to let himself go lest there should be another break down.

Knowing as we do how well Herber could write for the Press, it is strange that he never published any book.

However, he edited *Y Dysgedydd* (*The Teacher*)—an important Welsh monthly—for some twenty-two years, and wrote much in it from time to time. His "Monthly Notes" (from which a selection has been published in a volume by the Rev. O. L. Roberts of Liverpool) are racy, readable, and practical comments on the news of the month. They were always looked forward to with eagerness by thousands, were read with real interest and pleasure, and were often widely quoted in other periodicals. By this means Herber wielded an ever-growing influence over many of the most thoughtful people in all the churches. By his pen he pricked many a bubble, he strengthened many a weak cause, cheered many a weary heart, and sometimes gave the despondent a healthy, hearty laugh that did them good like a medicine. He could be sarcastic, but he was never cruel. He never hit a small man, nor did he use his position as editor to embitter strife. He sometimes carried a sword, but he was a man of peace. He was so large-hearted and magnanimous that even among opponents he had no enemies. He had neither time nor taste for small animosities.

He was a lover of good books. He read much and read well. He did not profess to be a great scholar, nor a skilled theologian, but he knew how to use books, and he knew how to study men. To know books without knowing men is only half knowledge. He had sympathy, and this enabled him to enter into the lives of his fellows. He understood human nature at first hand, and could thus play on every string of the heart. He read with an open mind, and was ready to receive new impressions and acquire fresh knowledge. As a theologian, he was not what is called advanced, but kept on the old lines, taking the liberty of differing from the critics, and giving others the liberty he claimed for himself. He was a convinced Congregationalist, but hated narrow sectarianism

as one of the chief curses of Wales. He had room in his life and heart for all sorts of people. He took part in the first meeting of the Free Church Council, and longed for the time when the broken glass should be removed from the walls that separate the churches. He had a large heart and very broad sympathies. Like most great orators, he was exceedingly sensitive, being easily touched by kindness and unkindness. But he could love largely and forgive with a grace that forgot past grudges. He had often to fight, but he never used poisoned arrows nor explosive bullets. He fought hard, but he fought fair.

For years the name of Herber Evans was almost as familiar in England as in Wales. I suppose no other minister of a Welsh church ever preached so often and so acceptably in English pulpits. He never felt quite so free and unfettered in the acquired tongue as in the tongue to which he was born; but he found the English language an instrument he could wield with pathos and power over the largest audiences, whether at Exeter Hall, Spurgeon's Tabernacle, or the City Temple. One of the most wonderful speeches he ever delivered was that spoken by him at the Tabernacle on the occasion of Mr Spurgeon's funeral. It was a great and solemn occasion, and it is sufficient to say that Herber's own heart was deeply moved; and he moved the vast audience as few could. He was an admirer of the great Baptist pastor, and had several times preached for him. In presence of that coffin with its precious contents Herber wept, and all the people wept with him. Strong men wept like children while they listened to what the *Sword and Trowel* calls Herber Evans's "marvellous oration."

Some people nowadays wish to chain our great preachers to the churches that have called them to their

pastorate, and grudge them the opportunity of serving others, even during their holidays. What a narrow, mistaken view of a great preacher's vocation! In a special position like that of the Metropolitan Tabernacle or the City Temple that may be justifiable; but it is ridiculous for any ordinary church to think of monopolising the services of a great preacher. He belongs to the larger church of his denomination, and the whole country is his parish. To a great extent it is so in England; to a larger extent it has been so in the Principality for many years. All Wales came to Llangeitho to hear Rowlands; but Christmas Evans, John Elias, and Williams of Wern went to all Wales. It is so to-day. In the smallest chapels, in the most distant valleys, the greatest sermons of the greatest preachers are heard. Thus our country has been evangelised, and thus it has trained its most celebrated orators. A sermon is not at its best until it has been preached some fifty times. If not worth being preached often, it is not worth being preached at all.

Herber was *the Pastor* of Salem, Carnarvon, but he was *the Preacher* of all Wales. His home church was proud of him and was proud of the fact that other churches wanted to hear him. No doubt some of the members grumbled at his many absences, but when he came back to his own pulpit he came back fresh and full of power, and they forgave him. They might easily have had a pastor they could keep to themselves, for no one else would want to hear him. Better Herber Evans occasionally than Mr Nobody Jones twice on Sunday and once in the week.

It will surprise no one to know that many efforts were made from time to time to move such a man as Herber away from Wales. He refused many tempting offers from important English churches in London and elsewhere. There is an impression abroad that every

minister is in the market, ready to sell himself to the church that offers the largest salary. There are many, no doubt, who are thus eager to move to larger spheres, and who are ready to answer any call that means a higher income. But this is not true of the majority. Even a minister has a right to go where his life may count for most, and even to ask for money enough to pay his tradesmen without being told that he is mercenary; though a minister of Jesus Christ is never to put money or position first, but service. Herber was several times offered four or five times the salary he received at Carnarvon, but he remained faithful to his native land to the very last. He readily helped English churches across the border by preaching at their anniversaries and speaking at their great meetings, but he always came back heart-whole to dwell among his own people. The English Congregationalists bestowed on him the highest honour they had to give by electing him the Chairman of the Union, and most worthily did he fill that high position. He had several years before occupied the Chair of the Welsh Union of Congregational Churches.

If in England he was sought after and honoured, it was in Wales that he did his greatest work. And there, where he was best known, he was best loved. There was scarcely a position of honour or of responsibility amongst his countrymen he could covet, that he was not offered or did not fill. He was elected at the top of the poll in the first School Board at Carnarvon, and was pressed to be the Liberal candidate for the Borough; he was chosen to be on the County Council, and on the Council of the University College of North Wales; and was made a magistrate of the County of Carnarvon. All this proves that if he loved Wales, Wales also loved him. He did much for Wales, but he never counted that Wales was in his debt. If he gave it his best, it also gave him its best. He was ever ready to speak up for his country, and do his utmost to promote

the true interests of his countrymen. He was a great encourager of the young, and nothing annoyed him more than to hear people disparage others, and detract from the merits of any one. He proposed once that these stingers, detractors, and fault-finders should all be banished to a small island on the coast of North Wales, called "Ynys Enlli," and he said afterwards that very numerous were the subscriptions offered him to pay for the transportation of these undesirables. The first article of his I remember reading was on "Sweet Oil," showing the duty of cheerfulness and encouragement; while almost the last article he wrote for his "Monthly Notes" was on "Giving Joy," and this was characteristic of him. He was ever a joy-giver. His coming into a roomful of people was like the lighting of another candle. It added to the brightness of the company.

It is splendid to have the open eye to see the beautiful in men and things:—

> "Not more of light I ask, O God,
> But eyes to see what is—
> Not sweeter songs, but power to hear
> The present melodies."

I remember well, on the day before his death, when we little thought how near the end was, we were talking around his sick bed of a young minister who was said to have preached the same sermon four times in different chapels at the Liverpool meetings lately held. Some of us were rather disposed to find fault with him. "But," said Herber, "you must remember that sermon *was a sermon.*" It was just like him to see the point worthy of praise. He would not subtract from the merits of the young man. The sermon was worth preaching four, yea, forty times, for *it was a sermon.* As Stevenson says:—

> "There's so much bad in the best of us,
> And so much good in the worst of us,
> That it scarcely behoves any of us
> To talk about the rest of us."

It was a happy thought to offer Herber the Principalship of the Bala-Bangor Theological College. Some of us had discouraged his trying for Parliamentary honours, feeling it was a coming down to give up the Pulpit for the Senate. But we felt he was eminently qualified to be a teacher of young preachers. He could even give up the ministry to multiply good ministers, attractive and effective. So he gave up his own pulpit that he might fill other pulpits with living preachers.

He felt it difficult to leave Carnarvon, the scene of many joys and sorrow, of trials and triumphs; but there were many things that attracted him to Bangor. The college had been in stormy waters for years, and he hoped that his undertaking the Principalship would bring it into a quieter, smoother place, as eventually it did. He had also felt latterly the long strain of the pastorate of a large church, together with his many outside engagements. He thought he could serve the denomination better by not being confined to any one church. Moreover, he was drawn by the need of the young preachers who were preparing for their life-work. So he undertook the office and spent the last years of his crowded life in giving the young men of Bala-Bangor College instruction and inspiration. In him they had *a preacher* telling them how to preach. His presence and example acted as a stimulus to many of them—that is, to as many of them as had the making of preachers in them. No tutor can make golden preachers out of leaden men. What comes out of the colleges depends on what the churches send into them. A certain minister said he sat under three ministers: the first was a preacher but no man, the second was a man but no preacher, the third was neither a man nor a preacher. Our colleges have the right to expect a man in every candidate sent to them. They must have good material on which to work. If they spoil good material, we have a right to find fault with them. If they fail to make some-

thing out of nothing, who can blame them? In fact, their work is not to make but to shape preachers.

Herber found good stuff at Bala-Bangor, with some disappointing exceptions, and he did his very best to shape that good stuff into good preachers, and not without much success. As usual, he put himself into his work, and for many years his influence will be felt for good in the preaching of the Principality.

Herber, though a many-sided man, was first and foremost a preacher. His life-work, his passion, was preaching. As a preacher he will be best remembered. From the very first he took a line quite his own, and though he has had several imitators, he has not had an equal in that line. He has left his mark on the preaching of his age, and the history of the pulpit in Wales can hardly be written without giving a place to Evan Herber Evans.

Born 5th July 1836, at Emlyn on the banks of the Teify in Carmarthenshire, he died at Bangor in North Wales on the last day but one in the year 1896, and was buried at Glanadda Cemetery. The members of Salem church, Carnarvon, with some other friends, have built a fine memorial over the grave. To that memorial, for many years, will come friends to weep, preachers to sharpen their swords, and other day hearers to thank God for the message they listened to from the eloquent tongue that now lies silent in the grave underneath.

Good-bye, dear, dear Herber, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away."

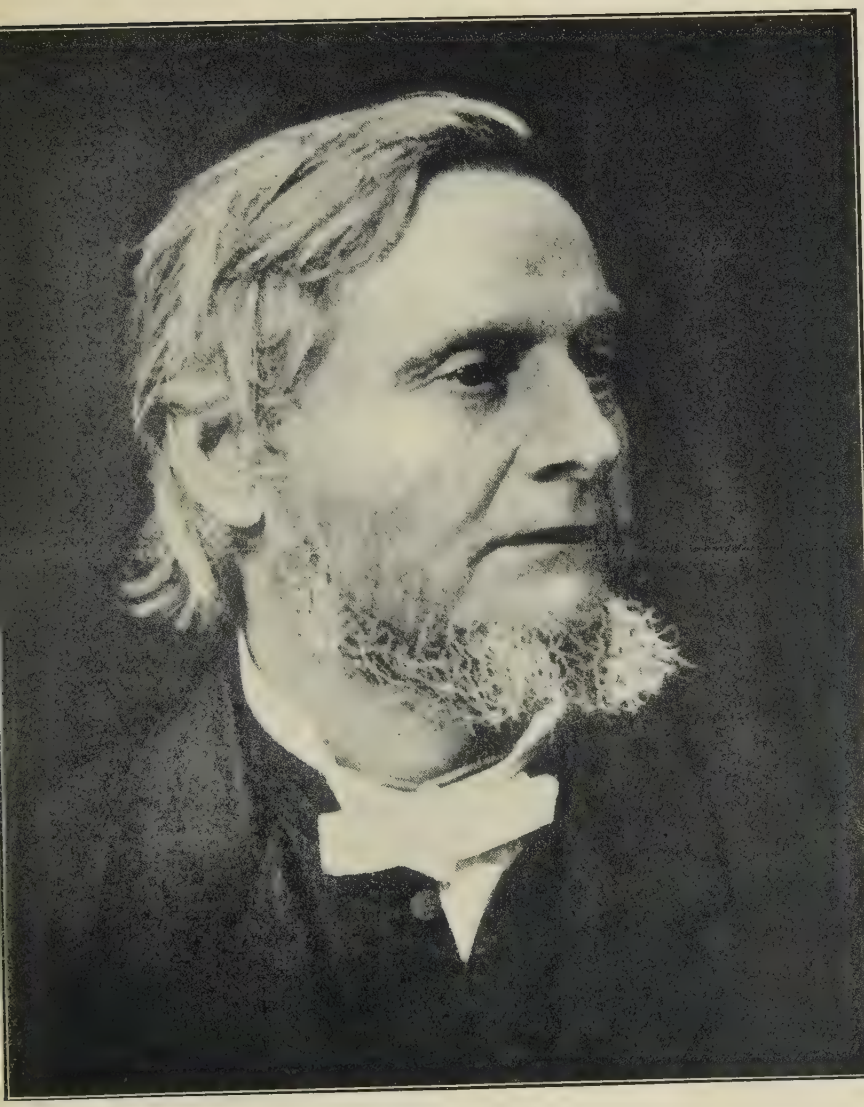
The Rev. JOHN THOMAS, D.D. (1821-1891)

By Principal CYNFIG DAVIES, M.A., Menai Bridge

I

John Thomas was born of godly parents, consistent members of the Calvinistic Methodist persuasion, at Holyhead, in the year 1821. They removed to Bangor when John was a child of six years. At the age of ten he lost his father, but the loss resulted in enhancing the sterling good character of his mother, and bringing into light the unmistakable verve of her Scottish descent. His Caledonian great-grandmother, Ellen Jacobs, on his mother's side, we may fairly surmise, brought in her own dowry of good mental and moral qualities to enrich the stock "of strong men, active, industrious, and remarkable for their honesty" descending in honourable lineage for ten generations from one Owen Thomas in the parish of Llanddeiniolen, Carnarvonshire, born in the year 1406.

From such ancestry sprang Dr John Thomas and his brother, Dr Owen Thomas, both messengers of the Living God, "masters of the congregation," and orators of the first rank. Owen being the senior by nine years, was to John in the place of a father for years; and John took his brother as his model in many of the functions of pulpit and pastoral work. Yet in later years they changed places, and John became the adviser of his more recluse brother on important matters of public life, especially when delicate handling and knowledge of men were required. Mr Josiah Thomas, in his biographical sketch of his father, Dr John Thomas, reminds us of the two brothers' love for each other; "Owen, my brother," was always upon



The Rev. JOHN THOMAS, D.D., Liverpool. [*To face p.* 248

John's lips. He believed him the best preacher, gentlest son, and dearest brother Wales ever bred; and I believe he was very near the mark. The account given by him in his autobiography of his boyhood, youth, and the three years spent at Dafydd Llwyd's shop, Bangor, forms one of the most interesting episodes in the history of a man of indomitable will coping with almost insuperable difficulties on his arduous path to well-won eminence and fame. He had the gift and the good fortune of being able to turn every obstacle he met into a stepping-stone to reach a higher plane of subsequent successful effort. His autobiography of the early years of his life has been separately edited and published by Mr O. M. Edwards, M.A., Oxford, and bids fair to become a popular Welsh classic. During the revival and temperance meetings of 1837 he received his "baptism of fire"; and then we begin to discover his resources of will-power, unexpected energy, and the copious diction he had at his command; and for one so young there was undoubted evidence of much original thinking, and clear promise of virile rhetorical imagination wherewith to beautify and clothe his thoughts. In boyhood he had fortunately ample opportunity of listening to the best public speaking ever heard in Wales, and the surroundings of the youth tended to make him thoughtful, serious, observant, self-reliant, ready of repartee, resourceful in debate, and acquainted with the contents and diction of the Welsh Bible. From the first he was particularly methodical in all he planned and carried out, and this strong trait, of necessity, produced also its own moral results in building up the blameless character of the man.

He commenced to preach with the Independents or Congregationalists in the year 1839, his first sermon being delivered at a homely residence called Henglawdd, near Menai Bridge; and after a valiant struggle against untoward circumstances with almost superhuman energy

to obtain some amount of training for his future career, he was invited in the year 1842 to undertake pastoral work at Bwlchnewydd, Carmarthenshire, where he laboured, "in season and out of season," for the space of eight years, most successfully, preparing his weapons and fitting on his armour for further and greater achievements. It was here he met the happy helpmeet of his life, the sharer of his joys, honours, and cares, Mrs Owen, the widow of his predecessor in that pastorate, a woman to whose wise forethought, and home virtues, and unstinted self-forgetfulness, Wales is largely indebted on account of the part she took in making it possible for him to leave his pastorate and his house so frequently, taking the burden of the care upon her own shoulders in order that the popular preacher, lecturer, and publicist, might be free to roam about the whole Principality in the service of all public movements. His second pastoral sphere was at Glynneath, where he turned to advantage the lines of study and toil he had taken up in his first pastorate; and his four years' stay at Glynneath, from 1850 to 1854, was most fruitful in many ways, yet, to some extent, forming an intermediate stage between his first and last pastorate. When he came to Liverpool in the year 1854 his position had been won, and he stood on a high vantage ground as one of the recognised leaders of the nation, and from then until his decease in 1892 the history of his life blends itself inseparably with the history of his country. One of the biographers of John Ruskin, in estimating the influence of the great stylist upon his time, makes the apposite remark: "One of the best ways of judging the work of Ruskin is to suppose the non-appearance of the man—supposing he had never lived." The same line of reasoning is applicable to the right estimate of the service done to Wales and the Welsh people by Dr John Thomas.

II

Let us enumerate some of the motive forces of his varied and unflagging activity. There are several items which enter into the reckoning — persistent energy of bodily frame and mind, tenacity of purpose from early youth, well-devised and clear-sighted method in all he undertook, an ever-persistent sense of duty deeply inculcated under his mother's care.

Hence his seeming sternness, especially on important occasions. But to those who knew the moral worth of the man, the apparent sternness of look and word merely meant virility of purpose, the manliness of conscious strength and right. When he appeared on any public platform to plead for conscience, liberty, and truth, as if before a tribunal of the people, there would involuntarily leap to the lip of many a hearer, the historic pronouncement, "Behold the man!" the term "man" being used not in its frail connotation, but in its noblest, strongest import, because he thoroughly eschewed, when standing before an audience, all effeminate habits of voice, manner, thought, and method; and no one could be more entitled to the description given by Paxton Hood of the platform of a powerful speaker as "the throne of eloquence." There appeared in his mode of thinking, and in the texture of his mind, a certain toughness which came as a constant reminder of the puritan tastes formed in his youthful days, and many of his best thoughts presented themselves to the mental touch as having the solidity of our native granite. It was strength, and not sternness; the live rock of truth, and not the cold contact of a block of ice. Yet even this power of massive truth in the latter part of his life became more mellow, being blended with the pathos which grew more marked with advancing years. There can be no effective oratory without a strong perceptible note of authority; and even the gentlest of men that breathed the air of time spoke as "one having

authority," so that His hearers were amazed at the power of His utterance. This note of amazing authority, it is said, was most characteristic of the eloquence of John Elias; and in some distinctive points Dr Owen Thomas and Dr John Thomas either consciously or unconsciously took Elias as their model in the art of speaking, and where could they find better for fine oratorical effect and execution? The babe John Thomas was christened at Holyhead by John Elias, and the influence, "spirit and power" of Elias were upon him all his lifetime. As Vinet appositely said: "What subjugates men is authority, and not passion. The man who is easily impressed by others is not calculated to make an impression upon them; he who trembles before them will never cause them to tremble." And the French philosopher instances the masterful boldness of St Peter at the first Christian Pentecost.

The multifarious duties which devolved upon him and his active career afford clear proof of the tireless energy of his nature. It has been said that some men are greater than their acts and writings, whilst others are less than what they perform. "The latter look better in pictures and print than they really are." Dr. Thomas belonged to the former category, and this is to say a deal, for he wrote so much and influenced the public from so many platforms. "His habits of intellectual self-help," formed under the straitened circumstances of his youthful days, served him in good stead in later years—years crowded with such varied and productive toil. The functions of politician and publicist engrossed a wide margin of his time, to say nothing of other important fields which tenaciously occupied his thoughts. In the capacity of a publicist of no mean rank, his weekly articles in *Y Tyst* (*The Witness*) for many years commanded much and continuous attention. Writing thus to a weekly, without a break for many years, with such exuberance and freedom of thought

untrammelled from mere conventionality, was a relief and pleasure to the energy of his disposition, as well as a delightful way of imparting instruction to a large circle of readers who looked to him for guidance upon all kinds of social, political, and religious topics. Yet, any real mental work of this kind must have upon certain occasions produced some amount of stress and strain, no matter how congenial it might have been to his tastes and principles; so that some of his friends and admirers were heard to say: Why this waste of time and energy so precious upon matters so trivial as compared with his higher work? But a remark made in reference to the late Dr Halley, when pastor in Manchester, will afford a reply and a reason in favour of Dr Thomas's mode of action upon social and political questions of vital import. "But no good man can forswear an interest in the great questions of a nation's life; and whenever sufficient inducement offered, he was to the front, and his voice was heard in the Corn Exchange and in the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, and his audiences almost invariably rose to him." With change of names and places, this may form a description of the strenuous work of Dr Thomas for Wales. As is the case with those who specialise upon exacting subjects, there were necessarily important and desirable fields of thought outside the scope and range of his inspection; nevertheless, he devoted much time to a few subjects, and lived for his country's highest interest, because a profound voice had whispered to his inner being early in life:—

> . . . "Thyself and thy belongings
> Are not thine own so proper, as to waste
> Thyself upon thy virtues, they on thee.
> Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
> Not light them for ourselves: for if our virtues
> Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
> As if we had them not."

His autobiography contains the following remark:—

"Possibly there is no minister in Wales who has been in more Parliamentary election meetings than myself for the last four-and-twenty years. Yet, from the election of 1868 up to the present time, the sum total of what I have received in them all for my services would not amount to £100."

Hence it was service of love and not of remuneration; and his country could very well afford to present him with two handsome testimonials or *honoraria* in the years 1879 and 1892, both amounting to £1702, 11s. 9d. After all, no monetary consideration could avail as a formal equivalent to the immense amount of labour he incessantly undertook with ungrudging loyalty of heart on behalf of the social, educational, and political welfare of Wales. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the chief current of his inner life ran strongly towards the Cross of Christ and the manifestation of its glory through human effort. In his deep-felt estimation the ideal service "set before us" is spiritual and not temporal, and this accounts for the slight misgiving he expresses, with the hint of a gentle warning, in an address which he delivered when the glamour and excitement of work was partly over, and when the race was nearly run:—

"I would by no means wish to suggest there is anything unholy in taking a public part in politics, but these matters should be of secondary value for those to whom the Son of God has entrusted the ministry, and to be entirely lost in them is certainly dangerous to spiritual religion. Possibly I may be allowed to state, and I am pleased my juniors should benefit by my experience, if I should begin again where I started more than forty years ago, that public questions—both political and social—and the external affairs of my denomination, should not take up so much of my labour and time."

III

THE first appearance of the youth John Thomas *as public speaker betokens undeveloped oratorical power of the first rank.* An orator, in the fullest sense of the term, is born and not made, for no amount of training can make up for certain defects of speech—defects possibly imperceptible to the ordinary eye and ear. We are informed that the first essential of finished oratory was hereditary in the Thomas family, that is, distinct enunciation, or clear articulation. This was the case with both Owen and John—their separate words or syllables were never clipped or mangled, but dropped from their lips like brilliant coins fresh from the mint. A large amount of the pleasure derived from listening to the two brothers arose from their clean-cut, sparkling articulation. Really effective speaking is almost impossible without distinct enunciation. There are two indispensable requisites of good enunciation—correct breathing and flexible manipulation of the muscles of the mouth from lip to throat. Many a time had we the exquisite pleasure of watching the good Doctor acquitting himself finely when performing some notable oratorical feat. The breathing is most artistic and natural, yet withal perfectly unconscious. With what ease all the movements of the machinery of speech succeed one another! It is an open-air meeting under the summer sun, with an audience of five or six thousand, and there is no reason why a single syllable should be missed by the furthest in the crowd, for the speaking is forceful, bell-like, and propulsive. This is what the ancients signified by the term "delivery"—such dignified and noble delivery. To describe his voice is not an easy task, because it formed a kind of picture or duplicate of the peculiarities of his many-sided character, and so striking were its qualities, that the first word it emitted in a railway carriage, or on a public platform, could not fail to arrest immediate attention. It

was not eccentric, but brimful of individuality, and indicative of methodical, purposeful resolve: it is the inflexional voice of a great speaker, and not a singer. With a range of a little over an octave in upper baritone or tenor—short in compass, but its gamut exceedingly well-developed, it was such that it gave a thrilling effect to that plaintive tone which formed so prominent a characteristic of the voices of the Thomas family; and when once heard under favourable circumstances, it would never be forgotten, and it had the knack of making some apposite saying cling to the memory in its company. Moreover, it was a rich and rotund lower tenor voice of marvellous inflexional variety and power, and could run from one extremity of its compass to the other with the utmost agility and ease. In faulty elocution voices are woolly, leaden, or muffled; but his was trumpet-like, vital, and resonant. Its tones came with voluminous force when uttering rebuke and warning or castigation of some public wrong, but discoursed the gentlest and tenderest pathos when expressing words of solace, mercy, and grace. Pathos in speech is largely due to inflexion of a particular type; the grave inflexion becomes the vehicle of authority; and in this Dr Thomas greatly excelled, as did also John Elias, to a marked degree. It goes without saying that an accent of authority and command would seem to some as being harsh of tone, whilst in reality there existed no harshness at all in it. As Dr Thomas advanced in maturity and experience, "the son of thunder" receded from view, and "the son of consolation" came into greater evidence, and pathos played a more paramount part in his ministry. Of course, he was master also of the acute accent of seeming hesitancy, playfulness, enquiry, and ironical philippic. Such an apparatus of speech, whilst its utterance lasted, was indeed a national treasure, and it is well to record a passing description of the gift ere the aroma of its breath has entirely passed away. Yet who can

describe the inner personality of an orator? And the same difficulty is felt in picturing a finely-poised voice that has vanished into silence.

Nearly all the great preachers of Wales within the last hundred and fifty or two hundred years have gained their greatest effect, and produced wonderful execution, by speaking in what is usually called the conversational tone of voice. To the ordinary hearer the inflexions, modulations, emphasis, and enunciation would be almost precisely the same as was heard in the small company around the table a few minutes before the service. Yet it must be understood that it is the natural voice with a difference, that is, a difference in force and volume: it is the conversational voice magnified to suit the size of the audience very much the same as a portrait in a small photo may be enlarged into a cabinet size, both being exactly the same except in dimensions. Sir Henry Irving used to assume the conversational tones of Faust, and spoke quite audibly to a house of some thousands. For instance, Christmas Evans had a voice of large compass, and delightful musical resonance; and with his rich conversational notes he never seemed to grow tired of speaking, or his audience of listening. Paxton Hood tells us that Christmas Evans was quite enamoured with the "soprano voice" of Robert Hall, which was rather unnecessary on his part, inasmuch as his own voice was by far the finer instrument of the two. Through want of acquaintance with musical terms or inadvertence, the word "soprano" is inserted where "tenor" must be meant. Of John Elias it is quaintly said by one of his biographers: "He always spoke in a natural voice; when he spoke to thousands he did not rise (raise) it to a different key. Charles of Bala gave him this lesson." It is a matter of certainty that Williams of Wern could speak without the least effort, as naturally as he breathed, to an assembly of eight or ten thousand at an open-air

service, and not a word need be lost, not an inflexion missed of that magnificent voice, by the furthest in the crowd. In the same way could John Thomas and his brother Owen talk—simply talk quite audibly to five or seven thousand people with the utmost ease, under the open sky on a great preaching festival. And how marvellously impressive a talk it was on many a time! There are three valuable advantages to be gained through the exercise of a conversational mode of delivery: it is more favourable as a starting-point for all other changes of tone, or oratorical devices; its naturalness fortifies the speaker against fatigue and voice ailments; and when properly attained, it is more pleasurable and more audible to the listener. "Habitually audible" is a peculiar, yet truthful, phrase used by Holyoake when he writes: "Habitually audible and accurate speech will make it easy, even a delight, to speak in public." Thus the gift of being audible is dependent upon the will of the speaker, and Dr Thomas succeeded to fling an enormous amount of will-power into his public speaking—now in a deliberate and impressive appeal, now in the clear ringing natural tones of exhortation, and then in the brilliant clarion shout of encouragement or warning.

In his first pastorate, in Carmarthenshire, *Dr Thomas paid special attention to style*, but before the close of eight years at Bwlchnewydd his florid style had been greatly modified, assuming a more restrained and dignified guise; but throughout his whole career the composition of all he writes bears the stamp of his oratorical bent; the flowing ease of the spoken words is transferred always more or less to the paper. First of all he was a preacher and orator, and afterwards all other functions held a secondary place in his esteem and procedure. Thus in natural sequence the spirit of rhetoric must have rendered even the written word eloquent; and we have

evidence of this tendency in the derivation of the term "rhetoric." Among the ancients, rhetoric was synonymous with oratory, but at present, rhetoric connotes both oratory and style of composition. "Rhetoric and oratory are supplemental to each other; the one stimulates the other." Our subject formed his own literary style, that is, he became a distinguished Welsh stylist on account of the independent and individual type of his eloquence. A richly-endowed individuality cannot fail to form a style of its own, or to alter the groove of the style appropriated by it from others. Style is an index of individuality, or originality in thinking and expressing thought. Dr Robert Vaughan in his essays reports a saying of Robert Hall: "Style, sir—style, after all, is the passport to immortality." The flowing, limpid, sparkling, vivid idiomatic style adopted by Dr Thomas in his Welsh writings is remarkable for sincerity, and is full of charm. He appropriated to a very full extent the advantage of a life-long and profound acquaintance with the Welsh Bible as an exhaustless mine of thought and an unfailing pattern of pure diction. His historian type of mind was analytic to a degree, and he took pleasure in setting forth his process of analysis before his audiences, that they might be able to follow him step by step; then they had the pleasure also of flattering themselves because they reasoned out the train of thought quite as well as the speaker himself, and nothing delights an audience more than to watch an easy ascent of pellucid thought. In order to carry his hearers with him, all his premises were fully worked out so that his audience drew the conclusion before it was formerly stated; and it cannot be said of him that he set up an edifice without a window to let in the light. A keen criticism is made in the preface to Dr Dowden's "Browning": "Much of the apparent obscurity of Browning is due to his habit of climbing a precipice of thought, and then kicking away the ladder

by which he climbed." An efficient teacher or orator must display his ladders, and point out the essential steps of his ascent. A demonstration is not as convincing as it may be unless the light is focussed on each movement in the process step by step.

By a principle of contrast the gift of impressive rebuke is closely related to that of felicitous compliment or commendation. This is exemplified in the productions of some of our poets, when the same hand pens the most delicate eulogy and the most scathing sarcasm, the same mental equipment seems to be required and used for both results, the same power of diction. On the other hand, there subsists some difference between these contrasted acts. Just appreciation can be expressed only by the exercise of mature discrimination and judgment, but to rebuke demands no similar acumen. At the close of a special service in the early years of his ministry when Dr Thomas had delivered a powerful sermon against the easy-going tendencies of the day, a brother minister came up to him expressing genuine approval of the discourse, and adding: "It is a good sermon, but it would be quite as well to clip its nails."

Once at a political meeting at Menai Bridge, at the the time of a Parliamentary election, his playful humour, quiet irony, felicitous epigrams, telling anecdotes, and happy asides, were simply delicious in point of flavour, so that not even the most fastidious critic could easily detect any flaw or lack of taste in the lively proceedings, and those who listened to his address will not forget its effect many a day to come. He made fine capital of the fact that the candidate of the opposite party was a perfect stranger to him, and not at all well-known to the constituency; and the culminating point of the amusing delineation of the opposing candidate, set forth with much drollery of inflexion, consisted of the simple remark, "and he is a 'new creature' to me," until the whole audience

was convulsed with laughter. Whenever he beheld a spirit of irreverence or froward impertinence flaunting itself, he met it with fearless reproof or a bristling repartee. Upon one occasion taking part in a special preaching meeting, he suffered from cold and hoarseness. Outside the door, after the close of the service, one of his hearers, a person from an adjacent village, came up to him to shake hands with him, and in accosting him brusquely asked, or possibly the man thought himself humorous: "What is the matter with your voice, Mr Thomas? You have need to draw a bunch of thorns through your throat to clear it." And the doctor instantaneously replied: "The best thing for me in that case would be to draw you through it." As the result of a genial disposition, his witticisms were exceptionally generous, and even his keenest raillery would generally dissolve itself into a more or less gay humour, followed by a cheery smile rippling over the whole countenance.

IV

NATURE had endowed him with many of the best qualities requisite for becoming a proficient historian. We have no reason to think that he prided himself on his qualifications, or professed to have received special training for writing history; nor did he, as far as we know, ever study the philosophy of history, being led unconsciously by circumstances and taste to cultivate the historic sense which was in him so strong. As was said of an English brother-historian of much the same calibre as himself, the eminent Dr R. Vaughan, he made no pretence of being a finished scholar or learned in the ordinary acceptation of the term; but when we bear in mind his early disadvantages, and to how large an extent he was self-taught, it is a matter of wonder his attainments were so great. "As it was, he was a much greater man, even intellectually, than a large number—the majority—of those who pride themselves on their scholar-

ship." Upon many an occasion, in the weekly articles written by Dr Thomas to *Y Tyst*, there were found criticisms of the highest value on some of the principles of historical method and research. From these strictures and *critiques* it became clear how carefully he had mapped out the field of his historical campaign. The following items, which he largely possessed, belong to the equipment of a safe and substantial historian—the analytical faculty of patient research, logical methods, love for truth for its own sake, unbiassed judgment, etc. No one could spend an hour in the company of our historian without perceiving his love of critical dissection of events and their issues, and without being prepared to endorse the sentiment of Mr Mather concerning Ruskin as being applicable in the present case—"His crowning gift was the swift power of analysis." Analytic knowledge, that is, the gift of mental perception, is often more valuable to the true historian than even bodily vision. The true historian is both a witness and a discoverer, or is always striving after discovery as investigator. In this latter capacity he handles facts and events under the light of truth in an atmosphere of exact veracity, and the sequence of events cannot be traced except by methodical instinct. Conjointly with Dr T. Rees, Swansea, he wrote "The History of the Independent Churches in Wales." But the fifth volume of this important work was written by Dr Thomas alone. From the nature of the case, the work is extensively biographical. Biography gains a deeper hold upon the ordinary mind than history, according to the common import of the term "history," as being more vivid and concrete, as well as on account of its being the earliest form in which history came into existence as the history of a series of individuals; that is, a record of ancient dynasties, and biographical history to attain to its best end, the best moral influence, must breathe of the essence of criticism; but the criticism of rational and noble life, to

quote Matthew Arnold, "must be sincere, simple, flexible, ardent, ever-widening its knowledge," and yet withal tender and sympathetic. The work he accomplished as historian is undoubtedly a monument of perseverance, methodical exactness, and lucidity.

V

We shall now specify some of the influences and circumstances which tended to add to his fitness for the work of the *Christian ministry*. His natural capacity and acquired attainments tend also to bring about many of the great and fruitful results of his public life. If space allowed, we might likewise refer to some of the most prominent features manifested in his long and successful term of service as one of the great preachers of Wales. The first years of his life, as is clear from his autobiography, were deeply influenced, through his mother, by a feeling of reverence for the pulpit and the Gospel of God. When he was thirteen years old his brother Owen commenced to preach with much acceptance and great promise of future distinction, and Owen exercised a deeper influence over his inner life and usefulness than any other person excepting his mother. The esteem in which both held each other made life more real, and their work more blessed for them and for others. Owen possessed a wider knowledge of books than did his brother; but John, on the other hand, was a profounder reader of men and movements. What is recorded of Dr Owen Thomas in "The Calvinistic Historical Handbook," is also equally true of his brother John: "To hear him at his best, when preaching on the stage in the open field, was a fair reproduction of what we have read about John Elias preaching on the Green at Bala. His eloquence and power at some such services were simply marvellous." Some callings, where a few workmen sit together having ample opportunity to

talk together on the topics of the hour, afford often a large amount of mental training to a youthful beginner which he could not easily acquire elsewhere; and this is particularly the case when the workmen are intelligent and of fairly good moral character. Dr Thomas, like the great missionary Dr Carey, began to earn his living on the shoemaker's bench, and fell under the influence of fellow-workmen who knew and talked a deal about the religious questions of the day. Under these circumstances our energetic young shoemaker not only gained a goodly sum of information and somewhat clear views of life, but also learnt to become a Rupert in debate, and master of pungent repartee, or humorous banter, for we have evidence of this in his racy autobiography. Moreover, there stood then "a race of giants" in the pulpit of the Principality who honoured and "magnified their office" as messengers of the Most High, or to use another figure, they were "stars of the first magnitude," casting their lustre over the land, and to become one of their coadjutors or successors was a thing greatly to be desired indeed. A mighty wave of spiritual influence at that time swept over the land under two aspects—temperance and a powerful religious revival—and the youth, John Thomas, drank deeply of these two wells of healing power for himself and for the nation. These two movements were the making of him in more senses than one. His resolve to join a denomination other than the persuasion of his parents came as a surprise to many of his friends, and to none more than to his mother; but in this as in most of the crises of his career, he chose wisely in casting his lot with the Independents, as subsequent events clearly showed, and the unconventional way by which he was thus able to enter upon the chief purpose of his life with as little formality as possible, well suited his special gifts, self-reliant disposition, his impetuous nature, and for one so young, a somewhat aggressive manner. He was taken

by the hand by Dr Arthur Jones, a Congregational minister in Bangor, very much in the same simple way as Ananias at Damascus introduced the Apostle to the Gentiles to his great work.

Towards overcoming the difficulties a beginner finds connected with the production of instructive and high-toned sermonic matter, imagination plays a most significant part—more so than with almost any other species of prose composition. Sermonic style is of such varied form and scope that it allows unusual room for imaginative invention first of all in devising the plan of the sermon, to say nothing of selecting the material and arranging details for filling in and completing each discourse. The vivid imagination and original thinking evinced in his early composition give evidence of a swift-paced, inventive mind, both ethic and spiritual in quality. Originality has been happily defined as "genuine individuality"; and if this definition be allowed to stand, he had possessed an aptitude for a style of composition to which the term original may be applied almost from the very start. Imagination, under the predication of swift, truthful, and refined invention, is an indispensable element in effective composition of every kind, whether it be the product of art or language. The Welsh preacher is frequently called "speaker" ("llefarwr")—as if speaker *par excellence*, with a sort of suggestion that the function must be edifying, natural, sympathetic, and truthful. In addition to this the freshness "of power and ingenuity of reasoning" were clearly stamped upon many of his popular sermons; yet it must be borne in mind that sermons as a rule belong to a perishable form of literature. Tulloch, in his criticism of Pascal's "Provincial Letters," makes the statement: "It is the fate of even the finest polemical literature to grow dead as it grows old," and this is especially true of the evanescence of nearly all sermonic writing. There are many reasons to account for the early senility from which

hardly any popular pulpit composition can escape. The sermon from the very meaning of its name requires to be sustained by the living voice of its composer. It has a style and fashion in its composition so liable to change as being a representation of a current phase of the moment. Without any real change of doctrinal standpoint, there may be, say, during one decade of preaching, an entire forgetfulness of distinctly dogmatic truth, and a great demand for the practical, the flowery, the poetic, or the fanciful. In another decade or two the didactic or the argumentative mode gains full sway. After this there may subvene another change in the presentation of Gospel truths, not through any vital alteration of facts or creeds, but simply on account of sundry modifications in the relative importance of what may be styled salient and fundamental truths, and some special doctrine, previously neglected, may float to the crest of the wave, whilst other truths for the time glide below the surface, and in a few years some other phase of some great evangelical doctrine may imperatively demand popular attention. All this may take place without any particular development in the knowledge and experience of Christian truth, but being merely a kaleidoscopic variation of the myriad-sided message of the everlasting Gospel to suit the needs of the hours and seasons of fleeting time. This, and much besides, brings it about that the bloom and value of sermonic literature, except in rare cases, cannot be perennial. The virgin rock of revealed truth must ever remain immovable, though the moss, lichen, and flowers of dogma growing on and around it may wither and vanish time after time. What is considered unorthodox to-day, may be to-morrow acclaimed by the crowd as the priceless possession of the true Church universal. When Dr Thomas commenced to preach, his statements now and again fell under suspicion for their supposed heterodoxy, because he allied himself more or less with the advanced

school of that day, holding the tenets designated then as "the new doctrine." Before he arrived at middle age, the doctrine once black-balled as new had become the orthodox opinion of the masses; and his doctrinal position veered but very little from this point throughout his long and popular course of evangelical usefulness. Moreover, his strong historic bent and instinct had undoubtedly a tendency, as is mostly the case with historians, to create around him an atmosphere of conservative dogmatism, notwithstanding his radical ideas in politics, his restless activity in new movements, and his love of young people, even in his old age. On one occasion the writer of these lines discussed with him the question of the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, and the good doctor expressed his firm sympathy with the opinions advanced by Dr Cave, whose book on the conservative aspect of the question he had just been perusing at that time. He was too liberal-minded to harbour bitter feelings against the conscientious beliefs of any of his brethren, provided they were sound and safe on the fundamentals of Christianity, and he was by far too optimistic in spirit and predilection, even under the burden of growing old age, to have anything to do with the doleful wail of some who groundlessly bewailed the decadence of the times, and the extreme deterioration of sound doctrine, and we do not know what besides.

Like the man himself, his powerful preaching had its own distinctive individuality, and it also bore upon it some traces of the peculiarities of the starting-time of the race he so well ran. One of these was its intense Scripturalness—Scripture in word, phrase, fact, anecdote, and allusion. And it is only fair to add, that his doctrinal statements as a rule possessed the saving grace, as many looked upon it, of being Biblical rather than dogmatic. We may suitably apply, in this connection, expressions used by Andrew Fuller in Morris's "Life of Fuller":—

"The Bible was his library, his treasury of knowledge, and to that he repaired with ever new delight. His fire of original genius was constantly fed by pure and rich supplies from this boundless source of intelligence; and this it was that rendered his preaching and conversation peculiarly interesting, affording fresh excitements to zeal and diligence in the study of the Holy Scriptures."

Though he seldom dictated or spoke to others concerning his methodical use and constant consultation of the Bible, yet his example made it evident to all how wisely and well he succeeded to draw "living water" and fill his vessels from the fountain of truth undefiled; and he reaped the advantage of a lifelong acquaintance with the Welsh Bible as an exhaustless mine of thought and an unfailing pattern of pure style. There are three things which especially impress us in observing his devout and constant use of Holy Writ. (1) Apt and swift capacity of quotation: his quotations were as precious stones chosen for most unexpected yet most suitable setting. Two hearers in one of his audiences interject their admiration one to another, as he quotes phrase or verse in faultless dictation: "How admirably striking!" says the one; and anon the other responds: "The felicity of perfect art, and yet so natural!" Dr Thomas refers to a saying of Christmas Evans, that some persons quote Scripture verses like children taking nuts in their hand without being able to crack them, but the nut when uncracked is no better as food than its mere shell. Not so was a verse handled by him, but rather as the box of costly spikenard in the hand of Mary, perfectly broken in due time with divine fragrance filling the whole house. (2) His mind and memory were imbued with the tone and spirit, the music and rhythm, the pathos and grandeur of the Welsh Bible. It fed his breath, and ennobled his very being. (3) The way in which he used the Book deepened his reverence for the Word of Life, just as some workmen sharpen their tools

by deftly using them, whilst others may cause damage to a cunningly-formed instrument through clumsy use. It was not mere respect for a work or for a masterpiece of human genius, but genuine reverence for the Word of God. Who ever heard of him practising the patronising air of a superior person, and patting the back of the "grand old Book"? But many a time was he heard to praise its comfort and light, with the reverential accent of the longest of the Psalms.

In spite of the fact that he followed somewhat closely for some years the puritan sermonic model in vogue in the earlier years of the Victorian century—the model of many divisions and distracting subdivisions leading up to "eleventhly and finally thirteenthly"—his good sense and natural gift of logical analysis saved him from many of the undesirable results of that cumbrous method of composition. The visit of his brother to Bwlchnewydd, the scene of his first pastorate, in the year 1846, exercised a deep and lasting influence upon the form of his sermon-plan and the vital warmth of his oratory, as he himself tells us:—"In the spring of 1846 my brother Owen paid a visit to Carmarthen to officiate at the Water Street chapel for three Sundays . . . I felt at the time that his sermons were of a higher type than anything I had ever heard before. His visit did me much good, and in conversing with him, I found that he possessed a very much loftier idea of preaching than anything I had." During the following five years he toiled hard and successfully to effect a change in his method, manner, and style of preaching, and his popularity rose to almost its meridian as the result of these strenuous efforts. For him then his brother's example and ideal became a dominant incentive, preaching a passion, and the Bible a constant companion. While he drank deep of the sublime pathos and dignity of the Bible in the vernacular, he also trained himself thereby in the accurate and idiomatic use of words. A certain

English prose-writer of acknowledged distinction is said to be indebted for his unrivalled style and diction to his long and close acquaintance with the rich and multitudinous phrase-treasury of the English Bible, so that he has merited the honour, says one of his appreciative critics, of having his name inscribed in the list "of word-kings of the world." For similar reasons, the subject of this article is entitled to a kingly sceptre wherever the language of Wales is spoken or understood. No exaggerated praise is offered by Mr O. M. Edwards, M.A., when he remarks :— "It would be an excellent thing to turn back to the best prose-writers of Wales and observe their force and smoothness of language, and thus explain their influence. Amongst these John Thomas holds a very high place. I do not assert that his style is perfect in all details, but in pellucidness, artlessness, and point, he is a pattern for us. The strength of his memory and his clear vision rendered his language as lucid and pure as the mountain rill." The pulpit and the Book purified and elevated his style and speech.

Earnestness for a speaker is as salt for a sacrifice. All his words must be sprinkled over with the salt of earnestness — the earnestness of conviction and agile activity, for busy lives are rarely lukewarm. Generous, yet careful, appreciation cannot fail to note that a live coal from the altar of sincere eloquence had touched the heart and lip of our speaker, and had thereby raised him to the noble rank of the prophets of the ages. As with Jay of Bath and Dr Parker of London, the predominant note of his oratory within and without the pulpit was earnest manliness; and the essence of earnestness is sincerity of conviction, staunch defence of the truth, and unflinching fidelity to principles. A tree is known by its fruit, and Vinet's *bon mot* must hold true, "An artificial enthusiasm will not convey a blessing." The efforts of his oratory were such as might be expected from the

eloquence of a perfervid Protestant moved with much of the Puritan's simplicity of devotion. An eminent French thinker tells us "Every genius has its great artery through which its blood flows." His great artery was the revelation of the Divine Christ.

VI

We may briefly indicate one or two of the most characteristic traits beheld in his public work and bearing. Whenever he made his appearance on any public platform, he gave the impression of stern, yet pleasing, manliness, if not a form of graceful and innate boldness. The keen, unflinching glance with which he scanned his audience as he uttered his first words seemed to imply intense sincerity of aim, aggressive and unfaltering faithfulness to tell the whole of his message, hiding nothing, and yet the piercing, mesmeric look of our orator inspired us with the idea that all he was going to say would be fair and just, measured and true. His early battles against straitened circumstances and difficulties as an orphaned lad striving to attain to honourable eminence in society and in the Church of Christ, had told their tale upon his character, and had caused him to be, for all time, as if buckling on his armour for the strife and for victory; and, moreover, the aggressive work he performed as a defender of the right and pleader against wrong must have exercised some influence upon his deportment and spirit. He himself relates an instance of fearless conscientiousness on his part, when as a youthful pastor he boldly strove to restrain his flock and hearers from the excesses of the "Rebecca riots," so popular at the time in the south-west counties of Wales, and he partly succeeded to stem the tide, or at least he felt the keen pleasure of having done a difficult duty without incurring any loss of respect or comfort. Nevertheless, there were instances in which his calm and

firm outspokenness caused him temporary or seeming detriment. It was in a spirit of veritable and far-sighted boldness that he resolved to meet the wants of the masses in his ministry by adopting a style of extreme simplicity and clearness, though at the expense of possibly being considered superficial and shallow by an important class of his hearers. Simplicity as well as sympathy is essential to all persuasive speaking; and the auditory addressed by the preacher is of a more mixed nature than that of any other public speaker. Under a sense of clear calculation and conviction, he resolved to practise a style of accommodation to the requirements of the million, after the example of the Master, in all he taught by lip and pen. A grandson of the late Charles of Bala thus describes the style of John Elias:—"He simplified everything, and set all truths forth in their clearest light, so that a child could understand him." This is a hall-mark of the true orator. Yet a healthful and resolute mind will not shrink from handling with earnestness and reverence the profoundest truths of Christianity. Such a mind will not hold in reserve certain essential truths, however mysterious and mystical, as being too important for the lay mind or everyday thought, but will muster boldness to make the sublime simple, and bring the far distant near the people. All such accommodation implies resourcefulness and tact—tact which is the essence of graceful conciliation. It is by this perfect act of subtle tact that audiences are at last won over to love and admire even a speaker who is a very Nathan of plainness of speech and straightforwardness of dealing. The chief elements of winsome oratorical tact are self-possession and brightness of thought and phrase; and these elements were his to a marked extent. His well-rounded life discloses to us the combined effect of a complete circle of extraordinary gifts and graces, just as a white pencil of light may be

formed by combining the colours of the rainbow Variety and change not only prevent monotony, but secure seasons of renewed force and conspicuous intensity, just as "a fixed beacon of light is not seen at sea from as far a distance as a revolving light." A rich variety of mental and moral qualities not only extend the area of usefulness, but also lift one another to a higher plane. They do not lie all on one level, but range themselves one above another, each raising its companion quality to a higher place, as blocks in a monument.

Method and memory were to him as his right and left hand in all his energetic and fruitbearing toil. His practice of precise method would partly account for his prehensile memory, and become conducive to indefatigable perseverance and concentration. Some of his feats of memory of names of persons, faces, and voices were almost incredible. There are three distinct properties of prodigious memories—ease of prehension when the reproductive faculty takes in its store with swift facility; firm and indelible retentive power causing the impressions to remain long and clear in the mind; and a third property is the capacity of training the memory to act over a wide area or field of knowledge. In the first two qualities, we have ample proofs, Dr Thomas excelled surprisingly. But over how large an area his memory operated with equal facility and efficiency we have no means of deciding. Possibly, like the majority of strong and retentive memories, his also was more vivid and retaining in dealing with concrete facts than with abstract ideas. However, we have reason to know that his mind had a giant's strength in reproducing words, phrases, facts, events, and all concrete issues. Hence the reason why he delights in biography in most of what he has written as historian. This also accounts for the large circle of friends he was able to keep in touch with

in every part of the world where Welshmen of national sympathies made their home. His tenacious memory did not allow the names and qualities of friends to be dropped out of ken at any time.

To form a fair estimate of a man of "eminent worth and distinguished service," it would be well to enquire what was his fort in character and consecration, and what was the point towards which he felt his powers chiefly and finally drawn. Much of his literary work was journalistic, and a large amount of that could not fail to be ephemeral in interest and treatment, having cost but little produced no lasting effect, and was read nevertheless by many readers for its characteristic spirit, uniform good sense, and judicious fairness. But yet it may be said of much of what he wrote to the weekly press for many years that hardly anything equal to it in all-round value could be found in any newspaper in the Principality for "light and leading" on matters of the highest significance for the welfare of the nation. Now it is safe to assert that his full power and best ability never came before us there. The picturesque tales he wrote were widely read, first of all, because they were his productions, and also because they were marked by much of the real excellence of his journalistic writing. In the art of tale-writing he would suffer a disadvantage from a feeling of incongruity, especially at that time, that in Wales a minister of his commanding position should be a tale-writer ; and to his honour be it said, he was too much of a Puritan by taste and training to feel and exercise the freedom necessary for a master of fiction. His successful and painstaking work in history reveals to us the true historian, even within the limited area to which he felt called and attracted. A clear-headed historian had chosen him for his colleague, viz. Dr T. Rees, Swansea, the author of "Nonconformity in Wales," a work of acknowledged merit, so that even

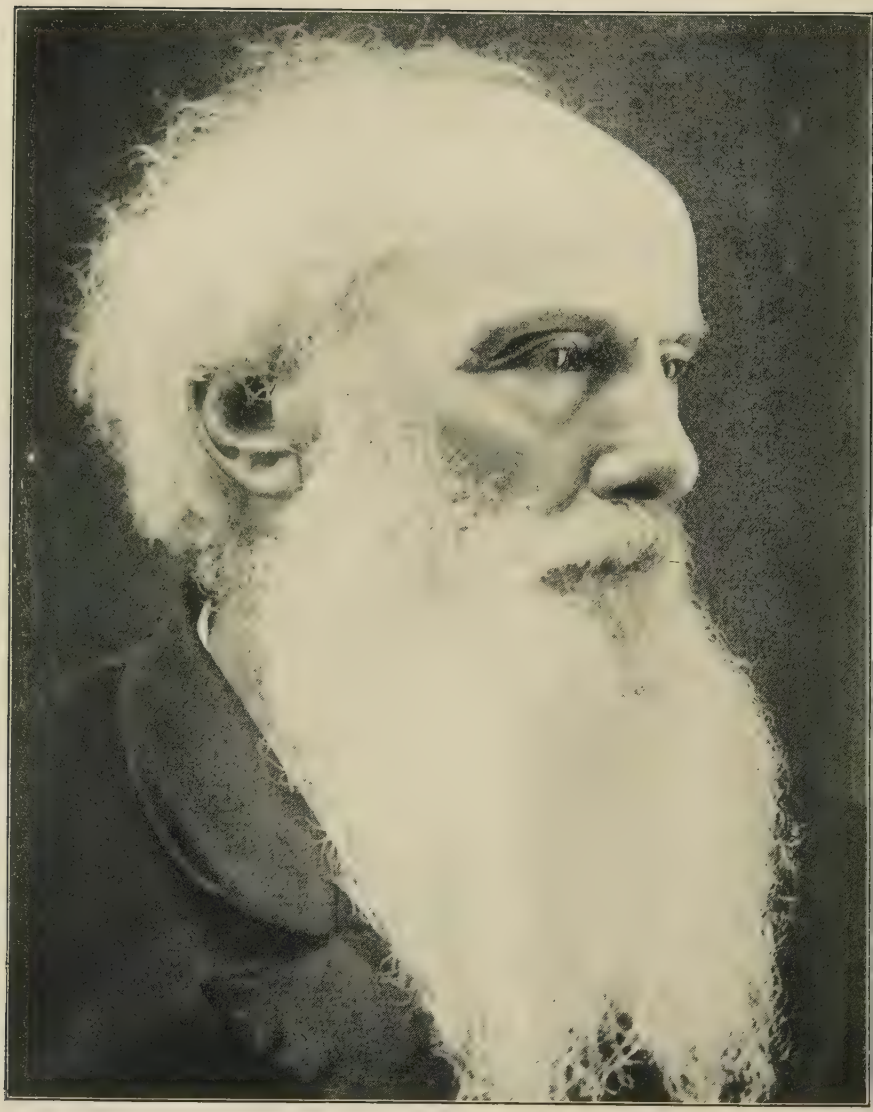
this invitation must count for something. Dr Thomas was naturally furnished with many of the essential qualifications for becoming a historian of conspicuous ability. But he had given his heart while yet in his teens to the service of the Gospel of Christ, and his first love was undying and regnant in his life up to his last breath. In many respects, through his native gifts and continuous exercise, he became pre-eminently skilful in manly and masterful elocution, but all this labour in the cultivation of a finished style of oratory during the first ten years of his pastoral work was undertaken with the view of offering as perfect a sacrifice as possible on the altar of the Message of the Cross. When he wrote as journalist for many a year, it was the pen of the preacher that was plunged into the ink. His chaste and homely tales—and it is no discredit to his memory to say so—were charming sermons in disguise. Yet in all he performed he was so thoroughly engrossed, that all his numerous engagements could none of them be mediocre or second-rate, and therefore some persons who heard him only on a political platform would readily award him the crown of the publicist in the race; but they had not observed the other facets of the diamond and their greater splendour. How nobly and faithfully he filled every hour of his heavy day's work from the dawn to the setting sun! The testimony of Mr O. M. Edwards, M.A., is pertinent and certainly within the mark:—

"He was one of the princes of the pulpit of Wales, one of its most powerful politicians, one of the most precise and laborious historians, and one of the most lucid and incisive writers that ever gave service to principles."

How suitable to his case is the sentiment expressed by Dr Dale concerning another preacher of no ordinary

renown : "He was a good man as well as a good preacher, good to the very core of his heart."

[We desire to call attention to the above analysis of Dr John Thomas, and especially that part of it which deals with his oratorical gifts. Nothing of the kind has ever appeared either in Welsh or in English.—*The Editor.*]



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The Rev. KILSBY JONES

THE GREAT WELSH TRIBUNE

By the Rev. J. VYRNWY MORGAN, D.D.

It was said of Dr Lyman Beecher, the father of Henry Ward Beecher and of Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe, that his sayings had been quoted oftener, both in private and in public, than in the case of any other man on the American Continent, with the exception, perhaps, of those of Benjamin Franklin.

So it might be said of Kilsby Jones in his relation to Wales and the Welsh. There was no Welshman that loomed before his age with a larger majesty of outline. The fascination of his name appealed to every class of society, amusing, instructing, astonishing, and inspiring all who came under the spell of his alluring individuality. From the day that his star began to ascend to the very hour of his death there was a certain romantic charm about his personality. And even now, in the most inaccessible regions of the Principality, men entertain each other by rehearsing his sayings, so pregnant with humour and strong sense. Yet, there was no man of his time concerning whose real character there was such a diversity of opinion. According to some he was profane—profane, because he was so unconventional. In the estimation of others he was a crank—a crank, because he never sought to adjust himself to his environment. A great many thought him eccentric, though it would be more correct to say that he acted as nature had made him. It is very interesting to note the estimate in which some

of the ablest and greatest men were held by their contemporaries. The immortal Ieuan Gwynedd, the famous defender of the purity of Welsh women, was for many years deemed unworthy of recognition. His discoverer was my old pastor, the Rev. Edward Roberts, one of the most talented men of his generation—a genius, philosopher, logician, scholar, and preacher of the first order.

But a great deal depends upon our view-point. Juvenal saw old Rome full of dissolute men and women; but Virgil saw it full of literature, and Tacitus discovered there many patriots and heroes. Juvenal found the husbands all debauchees, and the wives all hypocrites, whereas a more calm and discriminating historian found a wife of spotless fame in the daughter of Domitian. Thus all history and every personality are open to the invasion of him who wants to mock, and to the invasion of him who comes to praise.

However, it is not surprising that the most conflicting opinions have arisen regarding Kilsby Jones, for he was one of the best many-sided men that the Principality ever produced—a brilliant politician, an eloquent preacher, a delightful and original writer, a profound student of human nature, a famous lecturer, and an energetic social and political reformer. The more we study him, the difficulty of understanding his character becomes greatly intensified. Of the thousand and one men who knew him, every one had a marked impression—and perhaps they all more or less differed, though their estimate of him was very high. He was granted such liberty of action and speech as no other minister would dare to claim or expect. He was very Bohemian—always from grave to gay, from lively to severe; one moment he would send his associates into fits of roystering merriment, the next moment he would rehearse a portion of a sermon he had heard Ebenezer Morris deliver, and he would do it with such unction and pathos as to bring tears to the eyes of the

most callous and indifferent. He was erratic, he was turbulent, and often boisterous, still always fascinating. When out walking about the farm with some ministerial friends, he would suddenly stand still, and, without any suggestion or introduction, break the thread of conversation, and quote some racy saying of Carlyle, or Robert Burns, or De Quincey; or he would sing some familiar Welsh hymn. "Only a mouthful," he would say, then resume his walk.

Kilsby Jones was indeed a phenomenal character. He combined in himself the strength and weakness of the Celtic character. He had a nature which was hard to govern. He had more to keep in check than the majority of men, and it would not be fair to judge him by the ordinary standard of ordinary men. It was said that he was proud! Well, he did possess that natural pride which preserved him from the insolence and imposition of an unsympathetic world. He often passed up and down among his fellows with a certain awe-inspiring unapproachableness, and he could be very severe when the necessities of a case demanded it.

Again, God had placed on his shoulders a head that was worth carrying between heaven and earth—such a head as the sculptors of Greece and of Rome would delight to look at and to study.

It is a remarkable fact that some of the most renowned men in the world have been men of small stature, with awkward gestures, and no grace of features or of manner. Still, a fine appearance is a great advantage. Kilsby was a man with a fine and attractive personality—tall, straight, self-possessed, with authority in his tread, and force in every intonation of his voice. He was a glorious well-developed man, and looked like a god walking the earth. It has been remarked that the lines of austerity were the most conspicuous in that wonderful face. True, he was severe on the hypocrites, the tyrants, and the unnatural men who

had one voice for the home and another for the pulpit. He himself acted in the church as at home, and at home as in the church. But there were wells of tenderness in his heart—wells deep, pure, tender, bright.

He used to attend the annual gatherings at Carmarthen College, where he was once a student. One year, in particular, he noticed that all the speakers were paying their attention to the successful ones. When the chairman called upon him, he at once addressed himself to the students who had not secured any prizes. "Don't be discouraged," he said; "years ago I was in this institution, and in the very same condition. I never won a prize in my life, but I can speak English by the yard as well as the best of them to-day. You go and do likewise."

He was a bright and a breezy man, full of good spirits, never known to do a mean thing against an enemy, or even for a friend. He had great faith in human nature, but little in men; and he knew men. His estimate was invariably right. He had that natural discernment which enabled him to take a correct measurement of life. He had no patience with those who always tried to look wise, and who never could talk about anything save predestination and eternal punishment. His guide was instinct, not law. His ideal was himself. He claimed the right to eat, drink, dress, and speak as nature had created him. Not even Byron revealed himself with more candour to anybody and everybody. He flashed like a meteor, menacing, surprising, brilliant.

His own nature was so steeped in the choicest spirit of humour that it continually bubbled forth in jest and satire, but he was never false to his higher nature. His humour was often brilliant, though it had in it more justification than sanctification.

A friend exhorted Burns to "keep clear of the thorny walk of satire, which makes a man a hundred enemies

for one friend." But the poet was unable to act upon it. Kilsby thought it sinful to be stupid and gloomy in a world so full of brightness. He contended that happy people could work better. And if ever a race of people required to be humoured, it is the Welsh race. There is a peculiar melancholy about all Welsh poetry, Welsh music, and Welsh preaching—due, I suppose, to their consciousness of the fact that they are a subjugated race.

The Welsh mind has two distinguishing characteristics —quickness of imagination and a keen sense of humour. Kilsby made the same use of humour as mothers make of jam in giving pills and powders to their children. It stood him in good stead at many a stormy political gathering in Breconshire, Radnorshire, and Cardigan, though he confessed more than once that his strong natural sense of the ludicrous was often a snare to him.

While at school in Neuaddlwyd he used to attend the week-night services at Dr Phillips's church. He noticed that David Davies, one of the deacons, always prayed the same prayer. He determined to learn it, and to repeat it when the first opportunity occurred. One evening Dr Phillips called upon Kilsby and David Davies to engage in prayer. Kilsby was the first, and, to the utter astonishment of David Davies and the amusement of the members, he repeated the deacon's prayer word for word. The deacon begged to be excused, but it proved a means of grace to him, for he soon afterwards got out of the old rut, and was able to approach his Heavenly Father in a natural and honest manner.

Scorpion, one of the brainiest Welshmen that ever lived, had a reputation for laziness. A friend informed Kilsby one day that Scorpion was preparing a biography of the late Dr William Rees. "It is a great pity," said

Kilsby, "because Dr Rees will be out of his grave many years before the biography is finished."

While addressing the students of Bala College in the days of Dr Edwards, he said, "Now, I want you all to strive to become great preachers; and if you cannot become great preachers, do your best to marry women with money; and if you cannot do that, God help you."

He was preaching one morning at a certain church on the words, "And let all the people say, Amen." But no one said "Amen" except himself. "Why don't some of you say, 'Amen'?" he asked. Then, looking down into the big pews, he said, "And you deacons, why don't you join? what are you good for but to say 'Amen,' to lead the people? Now, I'll give you one more chance. 'And let all the people say, Amen.'" "Amen," exclaimed a fat, fleshy deacon, with a thin, delicate, feminine voice, whereupon Kilsby said, "What do you mean by a flute of an 'Amen' like that? If you say 'Amen' at all, say an 'Amen' worthy of a deacon."

He was not an abstainer. After lecturing on "Vicar Prichard," he went to supper with the rector of the parish. After helping Kilsby to some salmon, the rector asked him if he would like another glass of beer. "Yes," he replied; "yes, I think a salmon ought to swim."

But Kilsby was not always Kilsby. Like many other men, he had his moods. Such was the nature of his genius that he needed sympathy. It has been said of George Meredith that to hear him at his best he had to be confronted by some exceptionally clever interlocutor, like Browning and Mrs Lynn Lynton. Then the fantastic mind of the creator of "Diana of the Crossways" gleamed, as it were, from many faces, and with dazzling brilliancy. Kilsby could not speak on every occasion, and would not, and perhaps should not. He did not always preach well. Who does? Who can? He was at his best when

the theme inspired him, or when the company was fitting.

When a man distinguishes himself either in one or several departments of thought and life, the question is asked, "Who were his parents?" "Where was he educated?" "What were the influences that formed his character?"

Kilsby was born at Penlan, in the parish of Llandingad, about three miles from Llandovery, on the 4th of February 1813. He was christened James Jones, but when he undertook the charge of the English Congregational church at Kilsby, in Northampton, he adopted the name "Kilsby," and he was known throughout his life as "Kilsby." He used to say that "Jones" was no more of a name for a man than "water" for a river.

He was the son of Rhys Jones, who was pastor of the Welsh Congregational church at Ffaldybrenin, in South Wales. Rhys Jones began to preach in the year 1809, and was ordained in 1818. He died 3rd April 1862, at the age of eighty-two.

Kilsby's mother was born at a place called Gellifelen, in the parish of Llanwrtyd, in the year 1766. She became a member of the Welsh Congregational church at that place in the days of Isaac Price, at the age of thirteen. She married Rhys Jones in 1812, and died 12th September 1829, when Kilsby was sixteen.

There was as much difference between Rhys and his wife as there is between Judaism and Christianity. Rhys was a man of gloomy mood, always looking at the dark side of life, whereas his wife was ever hopeful. But Rhys had more reason to complain than the majority of the ministers of the day, for he was on more than one occasion in need of the necessaries of life. As preacher, pastor, and man, he was worth more than he got. This is one of the most unfortunate phases in the lot of a Welsh minister. The literary man in Wales is either

ill-paid or not paid at all. Indeed, none of the best work in art, science, or literature is ever paid for. All Homer got for his "Iliad" and Dante for his "Divina Comedia" was bitter bread and salt. The man who discovered the telescope, and who was the first to see heaven, was recompensed with a dungeon; and the man who invented the microscope died of starvation. Mozart died in the utmost misery, and was buried in a pauper's grave; and the man who composed "Home, sweet home," died without a home. Monuments have been raised to him, a museum has been formed in his native village of every object of interest connected with his memory, and important writings have been dedicated to him in every language.

"I have preached for you dozens of times," said William Williams of Pantycelyn to the elders of a certain Welsh church, "but you never offered me a shilling for my labours. You gave me lodgings for a few nights, then sent me away, as if I were a bird, to depend upon Providence." Then, turning to the landlady, he asked, "What was that tea you gave me last night? I did not sleep a moment." "Oh," she said, "it was the very best tea in the market." "Well," he continued, "the next time I come, please don't give me the best tea; I am only an ordinary man, and the ordinary tea suits me best."

When a certain treasurer paid Christmas Evans eighteenpence for two sermons, he said: "It isn't much, but the Lord will pay you in the resurrection." "But," replied Christmas, "how can I travel such a distance on such a small sum? And as for my poor horse, he has carried me twenty miles to the service. He will have no resurrection; it is only fair he should get something now."

Justice, however, requires that we should state that matters have greatly improved, and of course the market

value of money has changed considerably, though how a great many of our Welsh brethren are able to live on their present salaries and maintain large families is a mystery.

Shortly after the death of his mother, Kilsby went to the school kept by Dr Phillips at Neuaddlwyd, in Cardiganshire. His father shared the common sentiment among the country people, that town schools, and especially boarding-schools, were not healthy, and they preferred to see their boys and girls grow up to manhood and womanhood with too little grammar than too little bread. Kilsby boarded with a quaint old character, who bore the same name as himself, and who invariably prayed with his eyes open, and invariably shaved in the dark. The charge was fifteen pence per week for board and lodgings. As to the quality of the food, Kilsby said it was spoon food, and contained almost everything of which water happened to be the chief element. And the bed! Well, it was made of straw, and he had as his bed-fellows a great crowd of those unmentionable creatures with dark complexions, lively natures, and very busy habits.

He was disappointed at the first sight of the school, for instead of a fine marble building with towers shining in the heavens, as he had anticipated, he only saw a small thatched cottage. There were no desks or maps, and nothing but the cold earth to stand on. The students knew no more about geography than a Bedouin knows about mathematics. Every nationality, and almost every age was represented in the school—boys who intended entering higher grade schools, and men who were too advanced in years to take the usual preparatory course for the ministry. Some of them were forty years of age, and to hear these men parsing was one of the greatest temptations a man could meet with in the flesh. Fancy a tall, well-built, robust-looking man of forty or forty-five, with a long beard already turning grey, after several hours of study and preparation, getting up before the whole

school, and reciting with a loud voice that echoed almost to the clouds, "A has four sounds"—no more. There was something so ludicrous in the disparity between the size of the reciter and his lesson, that it was impossible to keep a serious face. It was one of the sights of the school, and no one enjoyed it more than Kilsby; but he took care to keep at a very respectable distance during the dinner-hour, for, if caught, he would be sure of a flogging. Every Monday was set apart to receive the report of the monitor. It was a sad day for boys of Kilsby's temperament and means. But it was a joyful day for Dr Phillips. The monitor had the power to fine any student who happened to be caught speaking Welsh, or making any disturbance. The fines had in previous years been applied to a general fund for the purpose of securing a library; but when Kilsby was there they were kept to buy tobacco for the old doctor. The monitor knew how much tobacco the old man consumed in a week; and if there was not sufficient money in hand, there was nothing to do but to put down the names of those who had established their reputation as "incorrigibles," though happening to be perfectly innocent.

There were three things that Dr Phillips aimed at: grammar, translation (Welsh to English), and reading. In this respect the school proved an immense blessing to hundreds of young Welshmen. To hear Dr Phillips read a chapter was a treat. He used to say that the Word of God was worth a hundred sermons. It was while at this school that Kilsby learned the art of reading, and by reading I do not mean the pronunciation of the words only, or the inflection of the voice, but the true appreciation of the meaning of what one reads.

Such was the ground work of Kilsby's early training. From Neuaddlwyd he went to Blackburn, where he studied Greek under Dr Alexander Lindsay of Edinburgh, and mastered the English language.

He was expelled from Blackburn on account of some irregularity. The late Dr Raffles of Liverpool was the chairman of the committee that decided upon the expulsion. Kilsby being poor, and travelling more expensive then than now, had to walk all the way back to Wales. Years afterwards, when Kilsby's name and fame had gone far and wide, Dr Raffles met him in Lime Street, Liverpool, in the company of a ministerial friend; and without any knowledge of the fact that he was the very man who had been expelled, invited him to occupy the pulpit at Great George Street; but he declined the favour with thanks. Great was the astonishment of Dr Raffles when he was acquainted with the facts of the case.

Being ashamed to face his aged father, he sought refuge in the home of the Rev. J. Williams at Troedrhiwdalar. The expulsion had seriously affected him, and at one time it was thought he had become demented. Addressing Mrs Williams one evening, while the family were at supper, he asked: "Do you think that God will judge the people of Ffaldybrenin one by one?" She looked at him in utter astonishment; but he continued: "I don't think so. I have been watching the farmers take their sheep and cattle to Llanybyther Fair; they don't take them one by one, but in groups of twenty and fifty. So God will lump the fools of Ffaldybrenin, and judge them in classes. He won't have the time nor the patience to judge them one by one."

Mr Williams sent his man-servant to accompany Kilsby to the house of his uncle, at a place called the "Goitre." The servant returned in due time. Mr Williams asked him if Kilsby said many foolish things on the way. "No," replied John, "but he sang and whistled while riding," and in John's mind whistling was a great sin.

But the "great unseen hand" had to do with Kilsby Jones. A way was opened up for him into the Presbyterian College at Carmarthen. A few years after he accepted a call to Kilsby, near Rugby, in Northampton. He commenced his ministry in January 1840, and was ordained 18th June of the same year. On 22nd April 1842 he married Miss Chilcot, from Leominster. From Kilsby he removed to Birmingham. "You have called," said he to the Birmingham church, "Kilsby Jones to be your pastor. Well, he is here; but he is not here to lord it over you, and, as God liveth, you shall not lord it over him." It was a shock, but it revealed the man.

From Birmingham he went to Bolton. While in charge there he paid a visit to Wales, bought Gellifelen farm in honour of his mother, and built a house called "Glenview" in a very lovely and romantic spot. He paid for the farm and cost of building, out of the money he had saved by his lectures and writings, £1,700. Here he opened a school, and placed a governess in charge. They taught music, painting, sewing, grammar, and arithmetic, and the school proved a great boon to the women of the neighbourhood.

In 1857 he received a call to Rhayader, in Radnorshire. Llanwrtyd not having been made accessible by rail to the neighbouring towns and villages until 1868, he was obliged to walk from Llanwrtyd to Rhayader and back across the mountains in all sorts of weather.

He had only had the oversight of the church at Rhayader for three years when he accepted a call to Tonbridge Congregational Church, London. He was recommended by Dr Thomas of Stockwell in these words: "I have got the man for Tonbridge; he preached for me last night. He will crowd your place, and, what is better, will do good. You must hear him—say in November."

I give here the contents of a letter I received from Mr A. Glass, the secretary of Tonbridge church at the time, and a particular friend of Kilsby:—

"For better or for worse, like a messenger from the clouds, Kilsby descended into the arena of the Bridgeton chapel. He looked the man for any place. He 'came, saw, and conquered,' for an invitation immediately followed. The conventional armour of gown, cassock, and bands was evidently distasteful to him. He tried a black gown, but even it was an incumbrance. His voice was just heard in prayer. Slowly, in measured sentences, he seemed to converse with the Almighty as a man talketh with his friend. No semblance to the Eastern spirit of adoration, and not a particle of the Western spirit or practice of complimenting the Deity on the variety of His attributes; nor did he lose his manliness as he stood and prayed that the hearts of his people might be right with God. He did not, on the part of his congregation, prostrate himself before the throne, and repent in dust and ashes. In the estimation of some, his prayer bordered on 'irreverence.' To others it was an introduction into an unaccustomed atmosphere of 'nearness of access'—into the real presence of the Eternal Father. In reading the Scriptures there was the same originality of style. There were explanations—short, pithy, and suggestive sentences. 'As new-born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word.' 'Sirs, there are some of us, perhaps, who have been members of the church twenty, thirty, or forty years, and we are still hankering after the sincere milk of the word—it is time we had an appetite for strong meat.' The sermon was a simple Evangelical statement, appropriate to the first appearance of a pastor, remarkable for an occasional sentence pregnant with meaning, and towards the end of the discourse there was the rhythm, the Welsh 'hwyl,' which sounded strangely in the ears of a Metropolitan congregation. Imagine the talk of the people as they made their way home. If some thought they had been in the presence of a master in Israel, not

a few shook their heads, asking, 'Do you call that the Gospel?' It was the first Sunday of the new pastorate, and the members met around the Lord's Table. It was a time of silence and meditation, only a brief prayer and the reading of the usual words. It was then and ever after a season of restful thought. The week following Kilsby presided at the first meeting of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society, to receive the report of a committee that had been appointed to prepare the rules. To the astonishment of the secretary, a methodical solicitor's clerk, Kilsby announced that he could not stand any rules. After some silence of surprise, the meeting was dismissed. The pastor had been told it was part of his duty to make the acquaintance of his flock at their own residences. He called on one of them, and finding that the lady was engaged downstairs in the domestic washing, forthwith descended, sat on a stool by the washing-tub, and smoked a pipe as he chatted with the woman and her maids. One day the deacons were flattered by observing Kilsby, well set up, in a neat brougham, driving with a wealthy lady-member; but a few days after they were scandalised by meeting him on a greengrocer's cart, evidently as much at home with the tradesman as he was with the lady in her carriage. If he was thirsty he would drink beer, and if very thirsty he would drink more, but always went on his way clear-headed and refreshed. No one enjoyed a cigar and pleasant company better than he. His interest was not bounded by the life of a Dissenting chapel. To him the world was not a mere Vanity Fair, and the Church a garden enclosed. In it, responsible for it, the world became his field for action. He delighted to describe his personal recollections of Carlyle and of his visit to Mazzini. He drew a picture of the great conspirator as a quiet, genial, interesting man, with soft manners, who, while the uncaged birds were singing and flitting about them, put Kilsby quite at his ease, and discoursed of Italian aspirations. One Sunday he dined with his deacons, as he was to preach that afternoon in the largest of the East End theatres. Before hailing the omnibus, Kilsby bought a pennyworth of apples from a street vendor. After con-

suming the fruit he lit a cigar. To say the least, we thought it a very unconventional mode of travelling to preach a Gospel sermon, but when the same unconventional man stood before the crowded audience, made up of the slums of Whitechapel, and told the story of the Prodigal Son and of the loving father, everybody felt that they had listened to a frank, straightforward, true-hearted man of God, who made the hypocritical wince. It was the breaking up of these conventional ideas and methods that had in them the form of godliness, but lacked the spirit of it. It was the manly that were attracted to the preaching; they felt the refreshing breeze of a bracing wind breaking in upon the close atmosphere of a lifeless religious profession, and it was not long before a marked change came over the character of the congregation. There came a gallant Admiral, K.C.B., and his lady, a well-known scientist, a justice of the peace, an artist more familiar with Bohemia than the inside of a Puritan conventicle, and a number of wandering Christians. A new order of preachers occupied the pulpit when the pastor was away. Father Gavazzil defended the current Evangelical orthodoxy of the day. A distinguished novelist discoursed on the young man in the Gospel. It was a very unconventional ministry; no one expressed a doubt as to its orthodoxy. His own sermons were never alike, sometimes they were hastily read from a manuscript. At other times they partook of the character of a friendly conversation. Occasionally they were more or less impassioned orations, delivered extempore with considerable force, but always suggestive of thought in the speaker to the hearer. But, according to conventional ideas, Kilsby was not a success, and no one ever attained success in the Church or world by leading an unconventional life. His salary was only £150 a year, and his intimate friends knew that, had he not eked out his income by literary labours, he would have been as badly off as any struggling tradesman in his congregation. To me he was like an old-world prophet crying in the wilderness of modern Babylon, unrecognised in the din of its ceaseless operations. He had been minister for four years, when he told the deacons one day that on the following Sunday he should

announce his intention of resigning at the end of the following month. 'Nothing can be gained by a longer notice,' said he. He was not, indeed, sorry to leave, and busy himself for a while on his little freehold homestead on a Welsh hillside."

Kilsby's successor at Rhayader had just left, and he consented to take the oversight of the old church, but at the end of the second year he resigned to become the pastor of Caebach, Llandrindod, Wales. That was in 1868. The following year he decided to build a chapel at Llandrindod proper, chiefly for the convenience of visitors. The building was completed in 1871 at a cost of £1,700. There was an endowment of £20 per annum on Caebach, and he took possession of it. In law he had no right to the endowment, and it caused a division in the church. Here he remained until his death—a period of twenty-one years. There was no such thing as a Sunday School, no church meeting, no diaconate, and he never attended a single prayer meeting. His justification was that he could not bear to listen to an ignorant man trying to be eloquent before the Almighty. He was exceedingly popular with the visitors. To hear Kilsby was considered a part of their enjoyment. Even those who differed from him could not withhold their tribute of respect. There was no stipulated salary, and no treasury. He took what was given, and was satisfied. One Sunday evening he asked the congregation to give something substantial, at the same time stating that he had lost his dinner by counting the threepenny pieces. Noticing an acquaintance wearing a white waistcoat, he said that no gentleman with a white waistcoat ought to give less than half-a-crown.

But it was at his home, Glenview, Kilsby was seen at his best. He enjoyed a quiet, careless chat, and was always good company. He had the genius for friendship, but he never wasted it on parasites and idlers.

Once he invited a minister to dinner. This is the form in which the invitation was couched:—

"Please lend me your mouth to put out of sight a turkey to-morrow at 1 of the clock.—KILSBY JONES."

Then he said: "Gentlemen, make yourselves at home. You can have whatever you like. I take this," meaning something stronger than water. Yet there was much of the monk in him. When asked how he managed to spend his winter nights in such a dreary spot, he answered: "I place a block of wood behind the fire, and plenty of coal; I pull down the blind, light a candle, take the daily paper, light my pipe, and thank God that the nearest fool is a mile away."

Kilsby died after a brief illness on 10th April 1889, in his seventy-sixth year.[1] He had repeatedly expressed a wish to be buried on his own farm, by a certain tree which he had marked out. This, he thought, would prevent his son from disposing of the farm, and squandering the money in riotous living. But he was buried in the old churchyard according to the rites and ceremonies of the Established Church. Only four Nonconformist ministers were present, and no sign of mourning, either at the grave or among the people at large. There is something infinitely pathetic in such a spectacle—so rare a character being laid to rest in such a manner.

"When the warrior dieth,
His comrades in the war,
With arms reversed, and muffled drum,
Follow the funeral car.
They claim the banners taken;
They tell his battles won."

[1] He used to say that a man ought to be ashamed to die before he is 75. Henry Ward Beecher placed the figure at a 100. "How old are you, now?" was the question put to Kilsby just before his death. "Don't ask too loud," he replied, "for fear my landlord might hear you. My lease is gone out—three-score years and ten."

But here is a Welshman, the bravest among the brave, one of the most gifted of our sons, patriot and preacher, a man who sought to place his race on a better footing to fight the battle for bread and place and power, laid to rest by the representatives of an alien Church, without any manifestation of sorrow among his countrymen at large.

What is the explanation?

There is only one explanation possible. While Kilsby stood high in the esteem of his countrymen, he did not stand high in their affection; and he did not stand high in their affection because they did not understand him, and because they did not appreciate his great mission in life. That he had a mission there can be no doubt. He struck a new note for the preacher, the patriot, the educationalist, and the Nonconformist. He supplied them with a new set of motives and impulses.

(*a*) He sought to teach men to live naturally—to live as God had made them.

John Stuart Mill said that society seemed to be conducted on the hypothesis that we are living amongst enemies, hence all the forms of etiquette. Kilsby shared this view, and his great cry was for reality, and he lived up to his own teaching. His pulpit manners were his street manners. He was manly even in prayer. He had no pretensions. The marks of his own peculiar mind were on all he said and wrote, and he was always in a happy mood when he had his fling at the dominant follies and hypocrisies of his time.

Here is his adjudication upon a certain recitation at an Eisteddfod in Crickhowell, Breconshire:—

"The first recited as if he were walking the pavement barefooted—no emphasis at all.

"The second was like a man with a wooden leg, walking in a garden—it was all dots, emphasis everywhere.

"The third," then he raised both his hands, and said,

"What foolishness — this reciter was trying to imitate some actor.

"As to the fourth, it was a natural recitation—let him have the prize. Now, gentlemen," he continued, "let me advise you, whatever you attempt to do, first be natural, second be natural, and so on to the very end of the chapter."

His was a risky mission, even for a man of his ability and manners; and if he had been less confident, he would hardly have dared to stand in opposition to the current of popular tastes and habits. He knew that there would be gathered in his path the most cruel and vindictive forces; but he was never so ironical, humorous, or complacently sarcastic, as when he was engaged in exposing the general obtuseness of the people, and in denouncing the hollow conventionalities of modern life. And yet one of his greatest jewels was civility.

(*b*) Again, Kilsby sought to interpret Welsh thought and life to the world.

There still prevails in the world at large considerable ignorance respecting the inner life and characteristics of the Welsh people. This is partly the fault of the Welsh themselves, for they have throughout the generations persisted in publishing their poetry, their essays, and their sermons in the vernacular, instead of the one language the world understands, and they have done this under the idea that the preservation of the language is essential to the preservation of their identity as a nation.

Moreover, philosophers and scientists have been rare in the Principality. We have produced some of the greatest preachers the world has seen since the apostolic age, but no great scientist or historian. We have, it is true, a few Welshmen who have distinguished themselves in the scientific world; but the Welsh intellect is not scientific. It is more closely allied to poetry than to

science. It is essentially religious. The Welsh have a talent for religion. Their temperament, the character of the country, their comparative isolation from the rest of the world, have helped to give a religious complexion to their mind, and the language is pre-eminently suitable for the expression of religious truths. It has not much commercial value, but it has considerable religious and poetic value.

What the Welsh of this age need is a great historian —a man with insight, with knowledge, and with power, who can command attention, and one who is qualified to give a full, correct, and lasting delineation of the real life and idiosyncrasies of the Welsh.

This was what Kilsby attempted to do, and he was, to some extent at least, adapted for the work. He was a Welshman by birth and instinct; he could speak and write well in both languages. He possessed a calm and discriminating mind. He was well-versed in the history and traditions of the Celtic race.

(*c*) Another part of his mission in life was to kill that sectional and exclusive spirit that has characterised the Welsh from time immemorial.

The national mind does not contain seeds of knowledge, not even the highest and most productive mind. It is through association with the best thought of other nations that the English have become great and powerful. They have in this manner succeeded in expanding their thoughts, in widening their sympathies, and enlarging their vision.

Hence this lordly nation called the English. The world is given them, and it resounds with the clang of their hammers and the ringing of their church-bells. . . . Where have her children not gone? What have they not done? Her banner is planted on ice. Her banner is scorched in the sun. Her shadow is over the seas.

I have just said that the Welsh mind is not

scientific, neither is it imperial. It is local, provincial, and exclusive.

(*d*) Lastly, Kilsby Jones endeavoured to deepen and to strengthen the national spirit of the Welsh—the spirit that governed such high-souled men as Owen Glyndwr and John Penry.

In the days when Kilsby was a child the masses of the Welsh people had no political ideals, no ambitions, no convictions. The few who had convictions were afraid to openly express them. They whispered them to each other when they felt sure the doors were bolted, and servants had retired for the night. The simple-minded honest Welshman, who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow, lived in daily fear of the squire and the parson. He was actually afraid to tell the parish doctor that he had the toothache. He was content to be represented in Parliament by some lord or squire who knew nothing and cared nothing about his wants. Some of these members spent their time and money abroad, and only met their constituency once a year when they came to address the electors. And what an address! It generally lasted fifteen minutes — five minutes in Welsh, five minutes in English, and five minutes to cough and drink water.

The majority of the leaders of Nonconformity regarded all social and political questions as outside the province of religion. Such questions, they thought, were too controversial, too turbulent and worldly, for Christian people to deal with. Hence they kept aloof, and allowed the squire and the parson full sway. In fact, the people had not only lost the gift of freedom, but even the desire for it.

This was the state of the Principality when Kilsby appeared on the scene, and he determined, if it were possible, to remove the conditions that made such a state of things possible. He went up and down the country

lecturing on John Penry, the Welsh Martyr, and reading his letters, written in prison to his wife and children. He emphasised the efforts of Penry to redeem his people from sin, and his struggles for liberty of speech and conscience. He urged his countrymen to drink in the spirit of Penry, and to be men of like passion. He denounced the Tory party because of its exclusiveness, and exposed the tyranny of the parson, the squire, and the landlord—the trinity that formed the evil genius of that time. He sought to improve the education of the common people, and to teach them the science of politics. He showed that for popularity, money, and mere rank, and the favours of the parish squire, he cared nothing. At election times he was in the forefront of the battle, not because he thought it the duty of a minister to act as political agent and agitator, but because the deplorable condition of his people called for a strong man and strong action. His speeches breathed the very spirit of consecrated heroism. No reformer ever had better weapons—courage, information, transparency of purpose, patriotism, sharp wit, power of retort, and, above all, the love of man and fear of God. During the greater part of his life he was continually in the throes of perpetual controversy, but he feared nothing. He delighted to stand alone. He was misunderstood, misrepresented, ostracised, but never ignored, for he was too powerful a man. He had to be taken into account by friend and foe alike. He stood out in sublime isolation, carving his way by the sheer force of his own personality. He had in him the pith and sinew of a hero. This was the programme of Kilsby's life, and a programme worthy of the genius of Milton, the eloquence of Chatham, and the zeal of the martyrs. But, alas! as I have already suggested, his countrymen did not understand his mission, and they did not care for his methods. Neither can it be said that he did full justice to himself. Through lack of proper

cultivation, he failed to reap the full harvest of his moral and intellectual strength. He acknowledged he never did his best. Had his devotion and his perseverance been equal to his ability, he would have been a man of European fame, and would have occupied one of the highest spheres in the religious world. He was indolent, and he played ducks and drakes with his genius, but his life was by no means a fruitless one.

In point of brilliant and impressive pulpit eloquence he still stands out as one of the greatest figures of the Welsh pulpit. He had imaginative powers of a very high order, and a mind richly stored with varied knowledge; he had the intelligence of a philosopher, and an eye that could search an audience through and through. As a preacher his fame went far and wide, and his services were in great demand.

In his sermon on the disciples on their way to Emmaus, which may also be found in "Echoes of the Welsh Hills," he made these observations:—

"In travelling, the mind grows tired sooner than the body. The experience of pedestrians largely points in this direction. I recollect the time when my feet carried me many a mile when I was too poor to hire and too proud to borrow. Now and then I met with men of extraordinary conversational powers, and forgot all about my feet and the roughness of the way; but when we came to the parting of the ways, and I lost them and their exciting conversations, I soon had telegrams from my poor feet. There are some men who talk to you so charmingly, that, even if you were an alderman, you would forget your dinner. On this memorable journey seven miles soon passed. It was now getting late. The shadows, which were cast deep and wide over the quiet glens and hillocks, told the travellers that they resided there, and had retired to rest, and that it was time for man to wind his way homeward for the night. The disciples arrived at length at their destina-

tion, 'but He made as though He would have gone further; but they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us; for it is evening, and the day is far spent.'"

Having spoken of the eyes of the disciples being so opened that they recognised our Lord in the breaking of bread, Kilsby proceeded to read:

"'And He vanished out of their sight!' What a blank when He vanished! I remember well the visits of my old friend, the Rev. J. P. Mursell, many years ago. Whenever he came he filled every nook with light; but when, after an hour's brilliant talk, he used to leave me in my room alone, the light vanished all too rapidly with him. I used to gather the remains of his presence, and indulge the fond imagination that he was still in the armchair. On one occasion a small brother called upon me, and broke the reverie. He was about to sit in the chair just vacated by my great friend. I said, 'Pray, sit in this chair, not that,' 'But that is empty,' responded the visitor. 'No,' said I, 'it isn't empty; it will be if you sit in it.'"

In comparing the good man with the righteous, this is what he said:—

"I think this a verse that will pay exceptionally well for knocking at its door. I think it will open if we persist. This world would be better than it is if all were righteous; yet it would be but poor if all were only righteous—those who only did what was in the bond. Have you seen the funeral of a righteous man? Yes, the chapel was full, but a handkerchief of the same length and breadth as a gnat's wing would have been quite big enough for the tears shed. Mount Gilboa was quite dry. Not one widow sighed, no orphan was the poorer that day, save possibly the man's own children. But no other orphan. When the father of a family died, this righteous man never pressed the orphan's hand and said, 'Do not weep, my little man; you shall not want; you shall have a roof over you, and bread to eat.' No,

when the child's father died, the cold earth was warmer than this righteous man's heart, though he was scrupulously honest. Will any one die for him? 'Scarcely—scarcely!' I know no one who would. But for the good man? 'Perchance.' Ah, yes! Job says: 'When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me, because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.' I think I can see Job passing by when he was in trouble. Some one says to a cripple who had received good at his hands, 'Job is passing.' 'What did you say?' is the prompt response; 'Job passing by? Where's the crutch? Give it me. Ah, yes! I see him, good soul. God bless him.' The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him. One asks the poor cripple, 'You would do a great deal for Job?' 'Yes, indeed.' 'But to die?' 'Peradventure.' But Christ died for evil men—what men have found difficult to do for their friends."

As a lecturer we place him in the front rank. His lectures on John Penry and Rowlands of Llangeitho were the clarion-blasts that set the long-torpid chords of patriotism throbbing in the Welsh heart. He drew his inspiration from the past—the great men of the past: the heroes, the martyred Welshmen, who had, in spite of poverty and want of early training, distinguished themselves in the world. He lectured also on the "Power of Money," "Rhys Davies," and "Williams of Pantycelyn."

In reference to Kilsby's famous lecture on "Vicar Prichard," the late Dean Howell wrote to me as follows:—"As a word-picture of the life and times of Vicar Prichard, the lecture left nothing to be desired—light and shade, breadth and detail, conception and expression of a highly artistic character being happily blended; and, as an exhibition of word-painting, it still stands alone in my recollection—only equalled by the late Rev. Thomas

Jones's (then of Morriston) famous lecture on John Williams of Erromanga.

His literary works will stand comparison with the productions of the most talented writers of Wales. His essay on the "Dignity of Labour" was acknowledged by Scorpion to be the work of a man who was master of both his mind and pen. He had a style, a form, and ideas of his own, always selecting new and untrodden paths. There is no dead or living Welshman who has made a larger and more substantial contribution to the permanent wealth of Welsh literature. If there are any who feel disposed to question the justice of this criticism, let them read his articles and essays on "Edward Miall," "Brutus," "Would the Death of the Welsh Language be an Advantage or a Disadvantage?" "Money," and his edition of the works of Williams of Pantycelyn, the great hymn-writer of a century and a half ago—hymns which still preserve in all its intensity the spiritual emotion experienced during the great Revival. And it is a significant fact that the hymns that are being sung during the present Revival are the hymns written during the Revivals of the past.

What I have specified is not a tithe of what Kilsby wrote, both in his own name and under fictitious names. He became one of the most famous men in the Principality, and that in an age of notable men—yes, and some of them great men. Who were his contemporaries? Dr William Rees ("Hiraethog"), novelist, preacher, lecturer, poet, and a giant in intellect—a man of whom Gladstone said that, if he had devoted himself to politics, he would have been Prime Minister of this country; Thomas Jones, the poet-preacher, the silver-tongued Welshman, who worked his way from the coal-pit to the most honoured and influential position in Christendom; Caledfryn, one of the chief bards of Wales; Dean Howell, orator, patriot, and gentleman; Ieuan Glan Geirionnydd; Henry Richard, M.P.; Dean

Howell; Edward Roberts, prince among princes; Dr Thomas Charles Edwards, scholar, author, and preacher, whose commentaries will stand comparison with any published on the same books; Ieuan Gwynedd, the defender of Welsh women; Ieuan Gwyllt; the three brothers, S. R., J. R., and G. R.; and Christmas Evans, one of the foremost of the anointed prophets, the power of whose imagination was so wonderful. In no other period of Welsh history did there appear such a cluster of famous men. And not the least among them was Kilsby Jones. His name became a household word. Not that he was a perfect man, or that we could hold him as an example in everything. He had his defects—defects that assumed a graver and a sadder aspect in him, as they did in Burns, because of the greatness of his genius. A great man will always be great in vice, in prison, in chains, and in martyrdom.

But having made all possible deductions for defect of character, how are we to diagnose him? It is no easy task to analyse a many-sided man like Kilsby.

He was certainly a man of genius, for he was essentially original. He had intuitive ideas. He drank in his emotional ideas from everyday life and his pictorial ideas from nature, which he was constantly paraphrasing. We speak of a man as talented, because he has acquired a knowledge of the different sciences. The man of talent seeks for knowledge in the schools, whereas the man of genius finds his library in the field, in the brook, on the mountain, in the sky and the forest. A genius, to deserve the name, must have originality—original wit, original ideas, and the capacity for giving expression to new lines of thought. For instance, Cromwell was a genius. Without studying statecraft, he became one of our greatest statesmen. Without studying the tactics of warfare, he became the greatest general of his time. So was Kilsby a genius, and the fine

eloquent outbursts which we had from the pulpit when he spoke of God's marvels in creation were mainly due to his close observation of nature in all her moods and tenses.

To carry the analysis still closer, let us see what were the most obvious features of his genius. I have already spoken of his humour.

(*a*) *Sympathy.*—Sympathy with nature, with the unfortunate and downtrodden in life. It seems as if his great heart had been framed to feel all that was human. He could be harsh when harshness was necessary, but he sympathised with the sorrows and the joys of his race.

(*b*) *Enthusiasm* was another feature of his genius. Great sweeping waves of passion came over his soul, as he pleaded for better educational facilities for his countrymen. When he moved, thousands moved. His politics had about them much of William Tell's wild bearing and defiance. His words were the words of one born to lead and to inspire. He was full of that fire which controlled Savonarola when he warned the citizens of Florence, and Mazzini as he discoursed of Italian aspirations, and Edmund Burke as he reached the climax of his impeachment of Warren Hastings. When he spoke, we felt that his thoughts were transplanted into us, and that feelings more powerful, heroic, and sublime took possession of our souls ; and as trees growing in the forest are said to draw each other up into shapely and stately proportions, so we felt in the presence of this phenomenal man. As he spoke our common feelings were elevated, and we felt as if a measure of his genius had been conferred upon our limited intelligences.

Some one spoke of enthusiasm as one of the world's superb forces, and well he might. It is a greater force than talent, or mere cleverness, or even money and power, when the test is really made. There have been great occasions in the history of this country when only the burning enthusiasm of her martyrs and reformers availed,

and great alternatives will again loom out when only the enthusiasm of patriots and righteous souls will secure the victory. Where cunning has been baulked, and sordid calculation has been defeated, achievement has been wrought by men, frail in body, poor in means, but mighty in power, because they believed in the justice of their cause.

(*c*) Another feature of Kilsby's genius, was *patriotism.* He loved his home, his fatherland, and his race. Sir Walter Scott has told us how, under all circumstances, his mind reverted to the grey hills and the wild border-country in which he was born. "I like," said he, "the very nakedness of the land: it has something bold and solitary and stern about it. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden-land, I begin to wish myself back again among my own grey hills." These bold, stirring words reflect with marvellous accuracy Kilsby's mental condition. He loved with a passion unknown to many the beauty and wildness of his native land. Read his description of his homestead and its romantic surroundings. It was written in Welsh, and this is my translation, though it is really almost untranslatable. It sounds like one of the old Greek poems, and I do not think it could be bettered by any author, or in any language:—

"I have seen this valley at dawn of day, when there was nothing to break the stillness but the song of birds, and the plaintive bleatings of the small mountain sheep, which are like so many white spots on those gorse-covered slopes.

"I have seen it at eventide, the setting sun softening the aspect of the rocky mass with its last rays, and I have watched the approach of night until every object was buried in utter darkness. I have seen it in summer-time, when the trees put on their new verdant garments, and the valley is covered with green grass and corn.

"I have seen the same trees in autumn, wearing all the colours of the rainbow, and the hillsides brown with dead ferns.

"I have seen it during a thunderstorm, when the roar of heaven's battery was deafening, and the forked lightning threatened to rend the retreat at any moment, and to cleave the mountains on every side. The echo of the thunder in the mountain recesses was terribly grand.

"I have seen it in the day of tempest, when the whirlwind had been let loose, and all the windows of heaven thrown open, as if again to whelm the earth.

"The roar of the wind in the trees of the headland, the rush of Irfon's torrent over its rocky bed, and the tumult of the overflowing brooks in the recesses of the mountain side, have given the listener some conception of the sublime grandeur of Nature's orchestra.

"I have seen it in dreary winter, every object seeming to gaze stealthily out of the snowdrifts, and man conscious of a stillness as of death all around him.

"Beautiful beyond description are these mountains in their mantles of snow, which gave a distinct peculiarity to the form of each one of them.

"Thou hermit valley of Irfon! the cradle and burial-ground of my homely fathers. I loved thee with a strong, constant love when sojourning in the land of the Saxon. Thou wert in my mind by day and in my dream by night. My chief desire was to die in thy bosom. I have loved thee with a love second only to the love of woman, and, in the opinion of sober-minded men, with mad intensity; but I care not, for I can say with the poet—'Thou valley, embrace me, and ye mountains, enclose me.'"

But Kilsby's patriotism, though intensely national, was universal. It blessed the home, and held as sacred all the associations of his fatherland; yet he was the friend of liberty everywhere. He was an ardent and loyal Celt, yet possessing something of that ocean-mindedness which Coleridge attributed to Shakespeare. He quoted the wrongs of the past, not with a vindictive passion, not for the purpose of engendering bad feeling, or of

preserving class- and race-hatred, or to forge the bolts of vengeance upon those who conquered us, robbed us of our land, and sent us men alien in blood, faith, and civilisation to preach to us in a language we could not understand; he recounted the achievements of Owen Glyndwr, and the fearful sufferings of John Penry, and sang the praises of the men of Harlech, not because he wished to destroy the Church — the Church which is national in name, but not in spirit— or that we might heap insult and vile epithets upon the Saxon; but that his race should, by virtue, by industry, by intelligence, and civilisation, assert itself, and prove itself worthy of a place amongst the races of the world. He loved his country, but he knew its faults. To him the lesson of the struggles of many centuries, and the loss of independence and the oppression of bygone years, was peace, contentment, perseverance, knowledge, and the desire to learn.

So, while Kilsby Jones will be remembered as a Welshman, he will be known as a man who rose above mere nationality, believing that word to be a geographical expression; and accepting in the fullest sense the dictum of Moses, Shakespeare, Max Müller, Tennyson, Lincoln, and other great men, as a scientific truth— "That God made out of one blood all the nations of the earth." Thus it is that Kilsby, though a Welshman by birth and spirit, had no trace of bigotry in his system; but like every other mighty man, he grew more generous with his age, and broadminded with his experience. Of him it may be said, and truly said, that he added to the glory of his country and to the lustre of his race. He was a brave and a magnanimous man, and with reverent hands I place this tribute on his tomb.

The Rev. LEWIS EDWARDS, D.D.

By the Rev. EVAN JONES, Carnarvon

During his long and laborious life, which he spent entirely in Wales, Dr Edwards occupied a position of great and growing influence in the Principality, and devoted unstintedly his unrivalled abilities towards its advancement. Inspired from his youth with high ideals, he deliberately laid down his plans for their attainment. These often conflicted with his strained circumstances, and were only surmounted by his quiet, persistent, and invincible perseverance.

First and foremost among his characteristics was his intense love of knowledge. In a letter to his friend, Mrs Matthews of Aberystwyth, he says: "I don't want more emolument, more worldly ease, or more respect. My only object is the acquisition of learning. Yes, my friend, learning I will obtain, and that soon. Adieu, my present comforts! Adieu, my cash, trash, and everything! I am determined to sacrifice you all at the shrine of learning, and to sacrifice learning again to the cause of my Redeemer." Much easier said than done, for there were formidable obstacles in the way, not the least of which was his own high standard of scholarship. What satisfied others was quite inadequate for him. Though not in affluent circumstances, his parents were able and willing to give him and their other children the best schools within their reach. Some of these schools were no ordinary schools. His earliest teachers had more than a smattering of knowledge.

The Rev. Lewis Edwards, D.D., Bala. [*To face p.* 308

Before he left his first school, he was able to read Cæsar and Sallust. At Llanfihangel-geneu'r-glyn, some miles distant from his home, he had clergymen for his tutors. One of these had a great liking for Virgil, and inoculated his pupil with the same. This only whetted his palate for more. At that time there was a school of some renown at Aberystwyth kept by Mr John Evans. Mr Evans had been for years a teacher in London, and was noted for his proficiency in mathematics. He removed here, but at the end of twelve months his teacher naïvely desired his father to take him away, as he had no more to teach him. His cry was still for more. Another, and a more serious obstacle was his firm adherence to principle. Tenderness of conscience has never helped a poor man. Ystradmeurig, a famous grammar school, was not far away. Here had been educated some of the best scholars of the day, and a large number of the Welsh clergy. It was a Church school, but there was no necessity for all its scholars to become Churchmen. His parents were Nonconformists, and would not hear of his being brought up to be a clergyman. His own convictions upon this subject were strong and unrelenting. This blocked the way for him to Ystradmeurig. When going up to London to join the London University, with light pocket and heavy heart, a generous Churchman offered to defray all his college expenses should he become a clergyman. But no. Even for the sake of learning he could not bring himself to betray his convictions. Within six months consumption had devoured all his little savings, and he was obliged to flee from London. He did not revert to the friend who had so generously promised to help him if he became a clergyman, but ran for refuge to a poor Nonconformist mission at Laugharne. Again, he might have sought succour in one of the Nonconformist colleges in England, as some good men had done before, though at the expense of relinquishing their former friends and

connections. He was too much of a Methodist for that. "Leave the poor Methodists?" he said. "No, not for the world. I was born a Methodist, and I will die a Methodist. The more I see of the religious world, the more I am obliged to exclaim, 'Welsh Methodists, with all your faults, I love you still.' I am a Welsh Methodist to my back bone." Truly, some excellent Methodists did befriend him. Others, and among them some of the leaders of the Connexion, opposed him tooth and nail. They did this, not from any personal animosity to him, but from principle, as they considered thirst for education a sure mark of the beast. He had to ask leave to enter college. And at one association, when he desired to go to Ireland to the *Seceders' School*, he was so severely rebuked for his temerity that he broke out to weep. In addition to all this was his independence of spirit. "If they do not feel inclined to subscribe for the sake of the cause," was his remark in a certain case, "I beg they will not do it for my sake, or as a favour to me. I do not wish to be indebted to any man living, be he king or subject, high or low, rich or poor." High sentiments, certainly, but somewhat inconvenient to a needy student thirsting for education. Truly, this was pursuit of knowledge under difficulties.

Nevertheless, having recouped his scanty treasury by serving for a short time the mission at Laugharne, at the end of 1835, he, in the company of Mr Phillips, sailed from Liverpool in order to enter the Edinburgh University. Here he was in his element. The professors were kind and appreciative, and Dr Chalmers took great interest in him. However, all his difficulties were not over. Cash ran short. No one was allowed to take his degree there without attending four sessions. His exchequer peremptorily forbid his returning for the fourth. What was to be done? Would the University relax its rules — an unprecedented occurrence — and let

him stand for his examination at the end of his third session, or would he have to return without the coveted hall mark? This did not trouble him. He had gained his point. He knew where he stood as a scholar among scholars. He had gained three prizes—one in each class he had attended. But it did trouble some of his friends, among whom were Professor Pillans and Professor Wilson. Without his knowledge, the former took up his case, spoke to the other professors in the Faculty of Arts, and, with the concurrence of the Senate, without any former such precedent, he was allowed to stand, and took his M.A. with credit. Years after, writing to an old student, Professor Pillans remarked: "I have a very agreeable recollection of your appearances in the Humanity Class. They were such as might have been expected of one who, with good natural endowments, had had the good fortune to be a pupil of one of the most distinguished students I ever had the honour and pleasure of calling one of my pupils—I mean Mr Edwards of Bala, whom I am often reminded of in reading my course of Lectures on the Philosophy of Language, by the hints and valuable remarks I received from him, and of which I availed myself and embodied." Professor Wilson also held him in high esteem, often quoting in his lectures some of his sentiments, and saying "that he [Mr Edwards] could, and ought to be, a prince among the thinkers of any age and any nation." He left Edinburgh in 1836, and did not visit it again until 1865, when he was honoured by his old university with the degree of D.D., which he, according to custom, went there to receive. After graduating, he did not rest upon his oars. He read incessantly. And in 1853 we find him spending some months on the Continent in order to gain greater proficiency in the German language.

While at school at Llangeitho, the home of Daniel Rowlands, he began to preach, and was received a

Member of the Association in 1829. From the commencement his intellectual abilities were apparent to all. Not so his delivery. Like Moses he was slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. This was a sad drawback. When voice and fluency were so highly appraised, his lack of speaking power marred him much. Many an old godly deacon weighed him in the balance and found him wanting. One especially, after listening to him one Sunday morning, ventured to animadvert with him, "Dear Lewis, don't you think you had better give up this preaching?" Others, however, with keener insight, prophesied a future for him. The ripeness of his thoughts, his extensive knowledge, especially in one so young, his piety and earnestness, made them confident that God had something great for him to do. And so it proved. Dr Edwards was not the man to relinquish what he had once commenced. By prayer, by study, by great care and conscientiousness, he became one of the foremost preachers in the denomination. His sermons were always full of well-digested matter, clearly and concisely expressed. A wonderful change came over his delivery. Instead of blurring his words, great thoughts and crisp, simple sentences became telling and forcible. At times, especially in the large associations, when his imagination was moved by the mighty things of God, and his whole soul roused, he could be heard at a great distance, his eloquence was kindling, and the effect upon his hearers irresistible. Some of his great sermons, so delivered, are well remembered to this day.

Early in life he had cherished the idea of establishing a school where young men who were inclined to offer themselves to the ministry might be educated. Among his papers, as early as 1832, the following "Outlines of a Plan of a Society for the Education of young Ministers of the W.C.M." was found:—"It seems now generally allowed that human learning, though not absolutely

necessary, is yet a valuable handmaid to the ministry of the Gospel. And it has long been a matter of wonder to many that a Connexion so respectable and influential as that of the W.C.M. should have no regular means whereby to assist such of their young ministers who thirst for knowledge, but from their humble station in life are unable to satisfy their laudable ambition. With a view to supplying this deficiency it is proposed that a society be formed (consisting of members and friends of the Connexion), which shall have for its object, by means of a fund raised for the purpose, to impart the benefits of a liberal but substantial education to those young ministers of the Connexion who shall be recommended to the Society by the M.M. [Monthly Meetings] of their respective counties."

With this view, upon going as a missionary to Laugharne, he opened a small school there. In a letter written 21st February 1832, he writes:—"I intend opening my school next Monday. I have found a sufficient number of scholars. The fund goes on better than I expected." Again, writing to his parents on 8th March, he says:—"When Thomas (his brother) came down to Pentowyn, I had started from there that morning for Carmarthen. Mr Lloyd came with me purposely for the sake of consulting the brethren about forming a Society for educating the young preachers of the Connexion. They all appeared not only willing, but anxious, to bring the thing about. The Committee has now been named, and the cause likely to go forward. Mr Harries would have the young men sent here to Laugharne, but I am afraid this will interfere with the liberality of friends in other parts of the country. I also know that men are so suspicious that they would snatch the least advantage to raise prejudice against me if they could. On this account, in the plan of forming the Society, it is intimated that the design is aiding young preachers in some of the

schools carried on by members of the Connexion. I have commenced the school since a fortnight. As yet I have but few scholars, but I know of more who intend coming."

His stay at Laugharne was not long, and with his departure his school, of course, departed. Not so its effects. Among his pupils were two men, at least, who have made themselves a name, viz., Mr John Phillips and Mr James Williams. The former was born at Pontrhydfendigaid, in Cardiganshire, but was then a missionary at Rhayader. Dr Edwards invited him to Laugharne to learn Greek and Hebrew; he consented. They both went together to Edinburgh, and were always bosom friends. Mr Phillips was one of the most eloquent ministers that ever adorned the Welsh pulpit. Handsome in appearance, with a fine voice, an inexhaustible command of language, deep earnestness, and fervent spirit, he always drew large congregations. His fame as preacher, even when a student, had gone abroad. "Phillips," said Edwards, writing in 1835, "gave them a wonderful sermon at Bangor. I am glad of it, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of the *Corph* in general, as it will disabuse their minds as to the effects of collegiate education. After serving for a time with great popularity as a minister at Holywell, he settled at Bangor, and became the founder and first principal of Bangor Normal College, which has done so much for equipping the elementary school teachers of Wales. James Williams was the son of a blacksmith at Laugharne. He was converted through the instrumentality of Dr Edwards, and became the founder of the Calvinistic Methodist Mission in Brittany, where he spent more than forty years as a missionary."

Though Dr Edwards left the mission and the school at Laugharne when he departed for Edinburgh, he never lost sight of his project of establishing a school for educating young preachers. So after taking his degree at Edinburgh he was better prepared, and more determined

than ever, to put his plans in execution. The Calvinistic Methodist denomination as a whole did not relish the idea of training men for the ministry. In the opinion of the mass, ministers should all be "taught of God," not of men. This adverse feeling had a strong retarding influence. Still, at all times, there had been a few who were strongly in its favour. Mr Evan Richardson, an old Ystradmeurig scholar, at the instigation of the Monthly Meeting, opened a school at Carnarvon in 1789. Here were taught John Elias and Richard Jones of Wern. The Rev. Thomas Lloyd opened a similar school at Abergele. And the Rev. John Hughes, the accomplished author of *Methodistiaeth Cymru*, kept a similar school at Wrexham, at which most of the then ministers of North Wales had their education. Soon after the death of the Rev. Thomas Charles, in 1814, the association resolved upon establishing such a school at Llangollen, and a young man named Owen Williams had been specially trained at Hoxton for the purpose. He dying in 1819, the project fell through. At Bala Association, in 1825, a resolution was passed to collect funds towards establishing a college for North Wales. But nothing further was heard of it. Mr Elias had great hopes of another young man, who had been well educated, named Evan Rowlands, succeeding to establish such a school. He died in 1828.

The same need was deeply felt in South Wales, and the same difficulty encountered their friends there. They had no competent man for the work. At last this great difficulty appeared to be in a fair way of solution. Two young men of good education were ready for such a post. Lewis Edwards had taken his degree at Edinburgh, and David Charles, a grandson of the Rev. Thomas Charles, had taken his degree at Oxford, and, instead of entering the ministry of the Church of England, as he had intended, had cast his lot among the Methodists. The men were ready, and the association accepted them.

Then another difficulty appeared. All were agreed that there should be one college. The question arose where it should be located. For years this continued to be discussed. The North Wales friends were willing to go to Llanidloes, Machynlleth, or Aberystwyth. The South Wales friends fixed upon Trevecca. Events were, however, hastening on. While the merits of various places were vehemently discussed, on the 30th of December 1836, Dr Edwards was married to Miss Charles, sister of the Rev. David Charles, and at Mr Elias's advice, he and his brother-in-law established a small school together at Bala, in the beginning of August 1837. Here he stayed for fifty years, until his death in 1887, and from this small beginning grew the present Calvinistic Methodist College.

The school was commenced in a modest manner. The prospectus runs as follows :—

"EDUCATION.

"MESSRS LEWIS EDWARDS and D. CHARLES announce their intention of giving instruction at Bala in the Classics, Mathematics, and other branches of liberal education. Every attention will be paid to facilitate the progress of the pupils in the acquirement of sound learning and general information, and in the cultivation of religious principles. Bala and its adjacent country, where the students may amuse themselves during the hours of relaxation, is remarkable for the beauty of its scenery, and the general salubrity of its air. Messrs L. Edwards and D. Charles will receive into their families a few pupils whose comfort and improvement will be especially studied. Comfortable lodgings are also to be had in town. The school will be opened on the first day of August. Terms: —Instruction, eight guineas per annum ; Board (washing excluded) twenty guineas per annum. No charge for entrance.

"BALA, July 1837."

The next year the terms for boarders were enhanced to thirty guineas. At first the school had only twelve pupils, of whom four were boarders and five were preachers. By April 1838 the number had increased to twenty-seven, of whom fourteen were preachers.

Though commenced simply as a private adventure school, from the fact that nearly half its scholars were preachers, it is clear that from the first it was looked upon among the Calvinistic Methodists as their seminary for young preachers. When South Wales resolved to open Trevecca as their school, under the superintendence of the Rev. David Charles (afterwards Dr Charles), Bala became the recognised College for North Wales. Located at first in an old warehouse, with old Mr Thomas Charles's study as an adjunct, and migrating from house to house, as it grew the Merionethshire Monthly Meeting, which was then united, bought some houses, which it reconstructed for the purpose of a school. Here it continued for twenty-eight years, until the present beautiful college buildings were erected in 1867 at a cost of over £10,000. Depending at first upon the fees of its students, and afterwards upon the contributions of the Monthly Meetings, through the untiring exertions of the Rev. Edward Morgan, of Dyffryn, and his son, the Rev. R. H. Morgan, M.A., a fund of over £50,000 was raised towards its maintenance.

As Principal, Dr Edwards had every advantage. The great ambition of his life was to become a teacher like Dr Arnold of Rugby. Careful in dress, tall, grave and dignified, natural and unassuming, his personal appearance demanded respect and reverence. To him the work and success of the college was above everything. His scholarship was exact and thorough. He never rested upon his oars, but continued his studies, as we have seen in the fact of his going over to the Continent in order to acquire greater proficiency in German. He read and thought incessantly, and his students had the advantage of it. His authority

over the young men was supreme, and the struggles which he had himself encountered in the pursuit of knowledge enabled him to sympathise with others under similar circumstances.

During the fifty years he was at the head of the college, more than six hundred students passed through his hands. Almost all these were leaders in their own circles, and became centres of influence in their various circumstances; and among them may be found some of the most active and influential men in their generation, both as laymen and preachers. Leaving out those who are still alive, we may mention the following among the noble dead:—Principal D. C. Davies, M.A., Trevecca; Thomas Lewis, M.P., Anglesey; Rev. J. Foulkes Jones, B.A., Machynlleth; Rev. John Owen, Tynllwyn; Rev. Owen Thomas, D.D.; Rev. William Charles, Gwalchmai; Rev. John Parry, D.D., Bala; Rev. William Lewis, Missionary to Khassia; Morgan Lloyd, M.P., Q.C.; Rev. Edward Morgan, Dyffryn; Rev. Edward Roberts (*Iorwerth Glan Aled*); Rev. Joseph Thomas, Carno; Mr David Jones (David Jones & Co.), Liverpool; Professor Ioan Llewelyn Evans, D.D., Lane Theological Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.; Rev. Griffith Parry, D.D., Carno; Rev. John Hughes, D.D., Carnarvon; John Evans, M.A., Stratton gold medallist, Oswestry; Rev. J. Ogwen Jones, B.A., Rhyl; Principal T. C. Edwards, D.D.; Rev. Josiah Thomas, M.A.; Rev. W. R. Jones (*Goleufryn*); and Rev. Daniel Owen, Mold, author of *Rhys Lewis*. All these, and many more, were men of which any institution might be proud, and who have materially helped in the elevation of Wales and the Welsh people.

The success of the college exceeded his most sanguine expectations. Students were attracted from far and near. Some of these attained high positions as scholars, while the education of the ministry as a whole among the Calvinistic Methodists was considerably raised. Fear had

been entertained that a college course might chill the fervency of the preachers. This proved to be entirely groundless. Upon the whole, the best scholars were the most eloquent preachers. Still Dr Edwards was not satisfied. He had further and higher aims in view. Not only did he want the Connexion to have a learned ministry, he also wanted it to obtain the highest possible benefit from that ministry. Writing in 1858, he says:—

"I am glad to say that we have still a goodly number of students, and that a few of them promise to make very efficient preachers. After all, this is the great want of Wales. We can never go on successfully without good preachers; and we need not fear as long as we have men who, by their preaching, can turn the world upside down. But we want a stronger staff of thoroughly earnest men of first-rate ability to devote themselves to the work of preaching the Gospel. But the status of the preachers must be raised. It is true that God alone can send forth the right men to the work, but in this, as in the work of personal salvation, we must labour as if all depended upon ourselves, and nothing can be more evident than the fact that, when the ministry is slighted and discouraged, there will be a dearth of able ministers. It is not necessary to enquire which is the cause and which is the effect, for they act on one another, so that the effect becomes a cause, and the cause becomes an effect. But how is this to be done? How is the ministry to be raised to its rightful position amongst the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists? I need not say that it can never be done by unfounded claims and self-assumed importance. If our dignity is to rest on hypocrisy and falsehood, it cannot last. We must deserve respect, and then we shall have it. In the first place, our standard of Christian character must be raised. In admitting a young man to the office of the ministry, his piety ought to be judged, not by sanctimonious appearances, but by uprightness of conduct. Secondly, our ministers ought to be, not only Christians, but Christian gentlemen. We are too modest and reserved in speaking on this subject; but it must have our serious attention.

Every minister of the Gospel must be a gentleman. Only read the history of Paul—what a perfect gentleman he was! And what is the sum of his instructions to Timothy and Titus but the essence of true politeness? It is to the minister, not to the people, he addresses the words, 'Let no man despise thee.' He ought to be infinitely removed from all vulgar habits, from everything ridiculous; in a word, from all that is mean and despicable. Thirdly, our ministers must be intelligent men. It will take an age to undo the effects which have resulted from the fatal folly of cherishing an ignorant ministry, and it is astonishing how backward they are even yet in many counties. I do not wish to entertain hard thoughts of any one; but certainly it does appear as if some of our deacons were glad to admit all kinds of raw, uncouth, ignorant lads, that they might have the pleasure of looking down upon them, and extending to them their patronage. And fourthly, our ministers must be pastors as well as preachers. It is abundantly clear that they will never occupy a high place in the estimation of the people as long as they are associated in their minds with trampers who are paid a paltry pittance in the way of mere charity. Each of them ought to be, not a Methodist preacher unattached, but the regular minister of some church. I do not want him to preach there constantly; but he ought to labour there as a pastor, and have a regular salary."

To Methodists of those days, all those remarks would be somewhat new; and the latter part, especially the idea of a church having a pastor and a regular salary, to the man of the Connexion was rank heresy. To insinuate that what he irreverently calls trampers were not model ministers was sin; but to say that each ought to be the regular minister of some church was a sin of the deepest dye. It is true that there were ministers who were attached to churches, and paid for their services. Still, they were exceedingly few, and hardly to be counted. The Liverpool ministers were paid, and served the churches, but were not attached to any particular church until

decades after this. Dr Edwards was as thoroughly convinced of the necessity of our attached pastorate as he was of an educated ministry. For this he laboured, and for this he was reviled, until he saw a large part of the churches adopting his views. In this he was supported by the mass of his former students and the leaders of the Connexion, especially by the Rev. Edward Morgan of Dyffryn, to whom, above all others, the immediate adoption of the movement ought to be accredited.

Writing to his friend, the Rev. Roger Edwards of Mold, 3rd December 1842, Dr Edwards says:—

"Five things again I ardently wish to see among the Welsh Methodists, and to do all I can to bring about:—1. A well-conducted magazine. 2. A society for the diffusion of useful and especially religious knowledge. 3. A Welsh Methodist newspaper. 4. A society for the support of the ministry. 5. A well-organised Home Missionary Society."

His mind was full of projects. Some of these he commenced himself, and if anything was stinted by others, he would give it his unstinted support. He was zealous for the Home Missionary and the English Causes Fund, for the establishment of the Fund in Aid (Trysorfa Gynorthwyol), and the foundation of the General Assembly. In fact, whatever he considered for the good of the Connexion he worked incessantly for. There was nothing too trivial for him nor too high.

Dr Edwards was a thorough, right-down Methodist. Writing in 1833, he says:—

"Nothing is further from my mind than to leave the Methodists. Though they have many failings, yet it is certain that there is something among them from above, which—as far as my observation reaches—is not to be found in any other denomination under Heaven."

He hoped to raise his country by raising the status of one denomination in the country. Still, there was nothing narrow or denominational in him. He would have been glad of a closer union between various denominations in Wales. Writing to his friend, Dr Owen Thomas, who was then in London, in 1852, he remarks :—

"I am glad to hear that you are going on so well in London. There is very little good being done in Wales. Plenty of talk in our associations, but no work. Do you not think that the practical men of the various denominations ought to meet once a year, not to talk, but to adopt some measures which might be generally useful to the Principality? I have thought much of it, and have spoken to several, but have met with little encouragement. I do not wish to start it, for it ought to come from the leading men of all parties. The principal object would be to bring out tracts for the people, and small books for the Sunday Schools. But one or more might be named at each meeting to write elaborate works like the Congregational Lectures. We might also do much to promote education, and more especially the establishing of a college for Wales. All the business for the ensuing year might be arranged at the meeting; then, perhaps, it would be well to have a standing committee to carry the resolutions of the meeting into effect."

His taste for literature began early. Books were his choice companions. These, at first, were few, mostly Welsh, and confined almost entirely to divinity. It was one day when he kept school at Aberystwyth that he saw a heap of *Blackwood's Magazine* at Mr Cox's shop. Some of these he was allowed to take to his lodgings. A new world was revealed to him. He had never before heard of Shakespeare. Milton he had heard of, but never read. Writing to a friend in 1830, he remarks :—

"For the present here I am nearly starved to death for want of mental food; but if once I enter college, I

warrant not a volume shall be left unransacked. I'll ravage them like a hungry lion—or, rather, like a boa-constrictor. I'll devour them one at a meal—Owen, Charnock, Goodwin, Witsius, Turretin, Poole, Vitringa—in with them flesh, bones, brains, and all. I shall have six months at home to digest them afterwards during the vacations."

He was always a voracious reader. To this, in after life, he attributed what he considered to be his meagre contribution to literature. Speaking at a meeting held on 15th June 1875, at which a testimonial, with a cheque for £2,600, was presented to him, he said:—"For the sake of his younger brethren, he desired to refer to one thing which had prevented him from being of greater usefulness. What had been a great hindrance to him was too great a tendency to read. Perhaps that sounded somewhat strange, but he felt that there was danger in it, especially in reading general literature. He was very fond of the English poets, but he often felt how hard it was to leave Shakespeare and Milton, and take up the sermon."

His first contributions to the press took the form of arithmetical questions sent to *Goleuad Cymru* when he was at school at Aberystwyth in 1825. In *Lleuad yr Oes* for October 1828 we find an important letter from him defending the Jewin Crescent Church, London, for expelling some of its members, at the instigation of the Rev. John Elias, for having the temerity of petitioning Parliament in favour of Catholic emancipation. From 1832 to 1842 he contributed several important articles to *Y Drysorfa*, including his famous translation of Cowper's hymn, "God moves," etc., and also several sermons to *Y Pregethwr*. In 1839 appeared the first edition of his address on *Natur Eglwys*, which made a great commotion. In 1844 he became the editor of a small monthly publication called *Yr Esboniwr*, of which only

fourteen numbers were published, in which, nevertheless, appeared the germs of some of his best thoughts. In dropping *Yr Esboniwr*, he was preparing the way for the issuing of a much larger and more important publication, *Y Traethodydd*, the first number of which appeared in the beginning of 1845.

In a letter written 8th November 1877, Dr Edwards gives the following account of the appearance of *Y Traethodydd*:—

"What I have to say regarding my connection with *Y Traethodydd* may be summed up in a short compass. Before I settled at Bala, I had felt a strong desire to see a quarterly publication started in Wales, and had used every effort to induce the Rev. Roger Edwards to undertake the work of editor. But on account of other cares pressing upon him he would not consent, and so the project, for the time being, fell through. But I could not find rest in my soul, and at the end of some years I resolved to make the best attempt I could, and I asked Mr Roger Edwards if he would become my co-editor. He readily consented, and, if my memory does not fail, to him *Y Traethodydd* owes its name. Two or three names had offered themselves to my mind, but neither of them answered so well to the plan which I had drawn out. It was intended to contain essays more than anything else; and that is what is to be found in the English reviews, only that they have lately given articles under the pretence of reviewing books. The intention from the first was to make it an undenominational publication. The difficulty in keeping it undenominational was to shut out divinity. This was the intention; to what degree it succeeded it is not for me to decide, but it has been told me, by some who had advantages to know, that *Y Traethodydd* had been a special means of putting an end to wranglings, and to modify the feelings of various denominations towards one another, by its showing that every sect had more truth on its side than was conceded by the other side. It is doubtful, however, whether I would have

been so ready to take the editorship had I known the trouble that was to follow. I had often to write several letters before I could get a promise. There were exceptions, but this was the general rule. And after having a promise, it was not seldom that a letter came, at the last moment, excusing; and I had to stay up the night in order to have something to fill the number. The effects which followed this compelled me to give up the editorship after being in connection with *Y Traethodydd* for ten years."

During these ten years his contributions to *Y Traethodydd* were numerous and important. His articles on *Cysondeb y Ffydd* left a lasting impression upon the theological thoughts of Wales. His essays on Coleridge, Kant, Gœthe, "Paradise Lost," and his translation of Hector and Andromache, and kindred subjects, opened visions before the monoglot Welshman not dissimilar to those revealed to him by reading *Blackwood's* and Shakespeare. The views expressed in his articles on Dr Arnold, Education in Wales, Classical Schools for Wales, and the Old Universities and the University for Wales, were far in advance of previous views on education among his fellow-countrymen, while those on William Salesbury, Morgan Llwyd, Dafydd Ionawr, and Cyhoeddiadau Cyfnodol y Cymry, showed them that they had something worthy to boast of. These essays and many others, written in an easy and stately style, have been collected and published in two volumes under the title of *Traethodau Duwinyddol* and *Traethodau Llenyddol*.

Besides contributing himself to *Y Traethodydd*, he scoured the country for contributors. He had made up his mind that the tone of the periodical should not be inferior to the best reviews published either in England or in Scotland. To accomplish this he had enormous difficulties to surmount. Wales was but a small and poor country, without great publishers, and with but comparatively few eminent writers. He was difficult to

please, and even when an article had been accepted, had often to return it for amendment. This brought him no end of trouble. Still, he succeeded in gathering around him such a staff of writers as would have done credit to any journal. Even then his troubles were only beginning. Granted he had the writers, where were the readers to come from? The magazine was to be undenominational, and undenominational publications in Wales seldom succeed. It was to be a superior periodical, but the best periodicals do not always secure the most numerous readers. Dr Edward himself had already found this out. Writing on the 19th December 1844, the publisher of *Yr Esboniwr* remarks:—"The country is rather indifferent about sending the money. . . . You will be surprised when I tell you that the fault found with *Yr Esboniwr* is that it is too learned." In spite of all this, *Y Traethodydd* turned out to be a great success, and created a clear epoch in the history of Wales.

As if all this was not sufficient for him, on the 1st day of January, 1847, he commenced *Y Geiniogwerth*, a penny monthly magazine, and continued it till the end of 1852, chiefly in order to support the family of his friend, the Rev. Lewis Jones, who supplied most of its contents under the superintendence of Dr Edwards. Of this, 20,000 copies were circulated monthly, and its stories, such as "Y Sweep Bach," stirred the children throughout the Principality.

As a divine, Dr Edwards probably held the foremost place in Wales. In his capacity as head of the College he taught divinity. He generally agreed with the views of Calvin and the Church from the days of Calvin. On the crucial question of inspiration he wrote as follows:—

"If they were to ask me my views of inspiration, I do not know that I could give a better answer than by telling them that I am not sure that I could give a reply to every objection, but that when I turn to the Bible itself, and read it in its own light, I then *feel* it to be the

Word of God. If you read it in this way you will soon feel its power. It will induce a spirit of prayer, and this spirit of prayer will give you a renewed taste for the Bible."

"In consequence of his study of philosophy at Edinburgh, and afterwards," says Principal T. C. Edwards, "we have from him clear and definite views of the doctrines of religion, and that in its Calvinistic sense, though he would not accept any doctrine without analysing and digesting it in his own mind, and independent of the judgments of all others."

In 1860 was published his first and only book, *Athrawiaeth yr Iawn* ("The Doctrine of the Atonement"), about which the late Principal T. C. Edwards writes as follows:—

"The occasion of its being written, on the one hand, was the increased popularity of the sentiments of Maurice and his school, among other subjects, on the Atonement, and on the other, the spiritual revival in Wales in 1859, which called for some statement of the doctrine which was the foundation thereof. Maurice and his school maintained the doctrine of 'objective Atonement,' but did away with every idea of anger in God such as could not be appeased except through sacrifice. The true obstacle to the reconciliation of man to God lay in humanity alone. The essence of sin is not the trangression of law, but the revolt of the selfish will against the will of God. And in the death of the Son of Man, Head and Representative of humanity, humanity itself had given that true obedience and that real humiliation to the will of God which now reconciles man to God. 'The law of Christ is the meeting ground of man with man, God with God; it is atonement in the truest sense of the word.' It is not difficult to see the way which Dr Edwards took of meeting such views. In the form of questions and answers between teacher and disciple he treats the doctrine in its relation to God, to the Person of Christ, to man, and to the history of the Church. The foundation of his doctrine is the great fact of Revelation, that God is not only infinite in his love, but also in

his justice. And his aim in his treatise is to prove that it is according to the evangelical doctrine of the Atonement alone that the full revelation of the love and justice of God can be seen in the death of the Redeemer on the Cross. The principle upon which he explains how this takes place is that 'the essence of the Atonement is merit.' Through this view he does away with every sentiment of 'commercial transaction' concerning the Atonement, and proves the consonance of the doctrine of the suretyship of Christ. The merit of the obedience of the Cross continues forever, not in the outward act, but in the Divine Person who suffered on the Cross; and the living virtue of the sacrifice thus becomes the possession of the sinner the moment he becomes, through faith, into active union with Christ. It must be felt that Dr Edwards, through his doctrine of the Atonement, has taken a great step forward, and has thrown valuable light upon the doctrine. In the view of 'merit' as the 'essence of the Atonement' there are many things which tend to take away difficulties in connection with the evangelical doctrine. There may be a tendency now and again in the treatise to bring in the sentiment of 'commercialism' respecting the Atonement after all, through following too closely the doctrinal foundation of the Protestant Reformation, and vacating faith so much of its moral content as to make it no more than the hand which reaches to take hold of 'righteousness' which is utterly outside the man himself. At the same time, the treatise is full of deep and pure thoughts, and affords a glimpse of every doctrine in its relation to the central doctrine of the Atonement."

This volume has been translated into English by his son, the Rev. D. C. Edwards, M.A., and published by Messrs Hodder and Stoughton.

Dr Edwards never took a prominent part in politics. Nor did he pose as patriot. Evidently he was a Conservative in his early days, for he vehemently defended Mr Elias and the Jewin Crescent Church for expelling a number of members who had dared to petition Parliament in favour of Catholic emancipation. He

was a staunch Nonconformist and a Disestablisher. As such, in latter days, he gradually inclined to Liberalism. Never, however, did he take an active part in politics. He favoured literary meetings, and had nothing to say against eisteddfodau. He never flattered his fellow-countrymen. Neither did he revile them. Still he loved Wales; he loved Welshmen, and more—he laboured for them. This was his great ambition. Speaking in his preface to *Y Traethodau Llenyddol* he says:—

"Though the writer did not participate in the feeling which associates the age of the world with the Welsh language, he failed to convince himself to believe that Welsh literature is dead yet, and there was an intense desire in his breast from his youth to do what he could to keep it alive and to foster it. That is one difference between him and many who are reckoned patrons of the Welsh language and people. They talk respectfully of our literature, but all on the supposition that it is now dead literature. We ought to be thankful to them for their good feeling, and their readiness to honour our memory as a nation; but we ought to show them also that we are not dead, nor think of dying soon, and that our literature is now stronger than it ever was before."

To sum up. Dr Edwards had rare natural abilities, a splendid mind in a splendid body. He hated shams and quacks. His education was solid and thorough. During a long and laborious life he devoted himself heart and soul to educate the educators of the people. He lived savingly in order that he might give his children the very highest training. To few it has been given to lead so many and such eminent leaders. Directly and indirectly his influence was immense. His writings will continue a treasure for ages to come, and the impress of his massive personality cannot soon be forgotten.

THE LIFE AND WORK

OF THE

Rev. LEWIS EDWARDS, M.A., D.D.,

PRINCIPAL OF BALA CALVINISTIC METHODIST COLLEGE.

By the Rev. H. BARROW WILLIAMS, Llandudno.

[In the writing of the following article very valuable help has been obtained from Rev. Tecwyn Parry's "Cofiant and Gweithiau Dr Edwards" ("Memoir and Works of Dr Edwards"); the late Dr Griffith Parry's articles in *Y Drysorfa* (1887), the late Dr John Hughes's essay in *Y Geninen* (1888), the late Rev. William Williams's reminiscences in *Y Geninen* (1888), and Sir Edward Russell's article upon Dr Edwards in his most valued series, "Strangers in the Pulpit" (*Liverpool Daily Post*).]

On entering the small but deeply-interesting and charmingly-situated town of Bala by the Great Western Railway from Ruabon, the most prominent building dominating the whole view is the Bala Theological College, which has so strongly influenced Wales in its theological and spiritual life. Proceeding along the main (High) street you come to the bronze statue of the late Tom Ellis, the ardent Welsh nationalist, who, "though dead, yet speaketh." Turning sharply to the left towards the lake end, you reach the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, in front of which stands the marble figure of Thomas Charles, of Bala, whose "Hyfforddwr" ("Instructor") and "Geiriadur" ("Bible Dictionary") still greatly influence Wales, and to whom, under God, she is indebted for her priceless inheritance of the Sabbath School.

In Llanycil Churchyard, on the lake side, lie close together the graves of Thomas Charles and Lewis Edwards, whose work for the Principality united them far more closely than the fact that the latter married the former's grand-daughter.

Thomas Charles, Lewis Edwards, Tom Ellis—these practically are the leaders of Welsh Methodism for a century!

The main features of Lewis Edwards's outward history are soon and simply told: his life in this respect strongly resembled his character and influence—simple, but profound; quiet, yet far-reaching: like the snow, the softer it falls, the longer it remains, and the deeper it penetrates.

He was a native of Penllwyn, five miles from Aberystwyth, in the county of Cardigan—a district which has produced many men of note in Wales. Among them stand out the Rev. John Roberts ("Ieuan Gwyllt"), who created a new era in Welsh congregational singing; the Rev. Robert Roberts, his brother, a gifted and popular preacher; Principal John Rhys, of Jesus College, the eminent Celtic scholar; Dr Cynddylan Jones, the brilliant preacher and expositor; and Principal Prys, of Trevecca College, the ardent leader of forward work. A very bright record for a small country district! But they all would gladly admit that Lewis Edwards is *facile princeps*.

He was born at a farm called Pwll-cenawon on 27th October 1809. His parents were of the farmer class, of strong character and deep religious convictions; and they had the great privilege of seeing their children following in their footsteps. Another son, the Rev. Thomas Edwards, was a leader among the Methodists of Cardiganshire for many years—a man of weight and worth!

After being in two schools at the village of Penllwyn,

he was sent to a neighbouring school at Llanfihangel, four miles off, to learn the elements of Latin. Thence he went to a school at Aberystwyth, kept by a very noted mathematician, Mr John Evans, of whom he always spoke with admiration. There he worked hard, until Mr Evans had to tell the father, "You had better take Lewis away now; I have no more to teach him." He returned for a little to Llanfihangel School, and from there moved to another at Llangeitho, kept by the Rev. John Jones.

He was now eighteen years of age, and had begun to preach. Soon after he obtained the post of tutor to the children of Mr Lloyd, Pentwyn, Carmarthenshire. Mr Lloyd and he became fast friends, and Dr Edwards was treated as one of the family. While there he went on with his studies; and after saving a little money, he decided to go to the London University College. It was with considerable difficulty that he obtained the permission of the South Wales Association (or Synod) at Woodstock (Pembrokeshire) in 1831, for the good old leaders could not understand or sympathise with his aspirations. In London also he worked with a will; through want of money, however, he soon had to leave, and undertook the charge of a small church at Laugharne, Carmarthenshire. There he practised in preaching English; and although he stayed there but three and a half years, he left an indelible impression upon the church and the district.

From Laugharne he went up to Edinburgh University, and had as his companion the Rev. John Phillips, the subsequent founder of Bangor Normal College. He worked hard and gained such distinction that the university authorities, at the instance of Professor Pillans, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, granted him the exceptional privilege of graduating at the end of three years, instead of at the end of four.

But now, what is the young Welsh M.A. to do in Wales? Having equipped himself so well, *what* shall be his work, and *where*?

It is said of Moses, the great leader of Israel, "He endured (*Welsh*, "ymwrolodd," encouraged himself) as one seeing *the invisible*." The rest of the story of Lewis Edwards's life amply proves that he too, undaunted by obvious and serious difficulties, both "endured" and "took courage" as one "seeing the invisible." He saw his place and work at a very critical period in the religious and intellectual life of the country he loved so intensely.

In 1836 he married Miss Charles, a grand-daughter (as has been already observed) of the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala. They had seven children—four sons and three daughters. And it is worthy of honourable mention that he consecrated three of his sons to the ministry of the Calvinistic Methodists—the late Principal T. C. Edwards, D.D., of Aberystwyth and Bala; the Rev. Llewelyn Edwards, M.A.; and the Rev. D. C. Edwards, M.A.

His ordination to the full work of the ministry took place at Newcastle-Emlyn Association in 1837, in his twenty-eighth year. Soon after, still in 1837, he began his great work by opening at Bala, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, the Rev. David Charles, B.A., A SCHOOL FOR PREACHERS. It was eventually adopted by the denomination as its college, then for North and South Wales.

In 1842 the Rev. D. Charles was removed to Trevecca to found the college for South Wales. The Rev. John Parry (afterwards D.D.) was appointed Mr Edwards's colleague at Bala, and abler or more devoted men were never found in any college.

In 1856, after due deliberation, it was decided to collect a Bala College Endowment Fund, and the Rev.

Edward Morgan, of Dyffryn (Merioneth), was appointed chief collector. His special fitness for the work, together with his intense earnestness, made the result a marvellous success. The sum aimed at was £20,000; but Mr Morgan made it £26,000, and collected besides £6,000 towards the building, which was opened August 1867. Upon Dr Parry's death, the Rev. Ellis Edwards, M.A. (now Vice-Principal of the college), and Hugh Williams, M.A., D.D., were appointed Dr Edwards's assistants in 1873. We feel thankful that both are there to-day, honoured and loved by all.

In 1884, at the Liverpool Whitsun Association, Dr Edwards was taken ill with a paralytic seizure, and although he partially recovered, the end was not far off. Early on Tuesday morning, 19th July 1887, in his seventy-eighth year, there quietly passed away at Bala College the greatest man, all things considered, that Heaven ever gave to Wales—a prince of scholars and thinkers, and a leader of our leaders. Wales never had a nobler or more devoted son, nor Methodism in Wales a worthier and brighter ornament.

His burial was a royal one; it took place on Friday, 22nd July. The crowd was immense: it included over 300 preachers from far and near, almost all of whom had been under his teaching at the college. The simplicity of the funeral service was characteristic of the man thus honoured. At the College House portions of Scripture were read by the Rev. Joseph Thomas, Carno (one of his first students), and the Rev. Dr John Hughes offered prayer. His body was laid to rest in Llanycil Churchyard, close to the grave of Thomas Charles. Dr Owen Thomas read the Scripture, and the Rev. William Williams, of Swansea, offered prayer. The singing of a Welsh hymn closed the simple service. "MY FATHER, MY FATHER! THE CHARIOT OF ISRAEL, AND ITS HORSEMEN!"

In Personal Appearance

Dr Edwards was one of nature's gentlemen, "adorned with meekness," simple, yet dignified. His very presence impressed the stranger, and impelled him to ask, "Who is this gentleman?" It sometimes happens that the outward form is comely, while the man within is pitifully small, if not morally worthless. Again, a kingly soul may have to work in a puny and distorted body. But in his case the outer man suggested "the hidden man of the heart." Of all the good and great men we have been privileged to know, he was *the most dignified.* Tall, slender, and straight, with a large and well-shaped head, placed upon broad, strong shoulders; his forehead was high and wide, and his eyes full of seriousness, kindness, and keenness, but with a twinkle of humour ever ready to leap out at the proper occasion. In short, his frame was a model of a strong and good man, and his face particularly *divinely human.*

In Temperament

He was naturally retiring and studious, not caring for the public platform and the popular conference. To do his work *quietly* was more consonant with his desire. "*There* he broke the arrows of the bow," not on the battlefield, amid the turmoil of the fight, but—

> "Far from the madding crowd,
> And from the busy haunts of men,
> Where bitterness is begotten, and strife is rampant—"

in the quiet of the study, and in deep communion with the "Urim and Thummim." He was a thinker first and foremost, and moved his denomination and his country by the quiet force of his mind, and not by the eloquence of his lips, or the brilliancy of his pen.

Is it not true that the quiet thinkers are the most effectual workers, after all? Their mind goes down to

principles, whereby to explain and direct the current of great movements. This is the key to Dr Edwards's life and work; he lived with ideas and spiritual powers, and was one of the rare men, *practical mystics*. He perceived the invisible *under* the present, which is insight; and he also perceived it *beyond* the present, which is foresight.

His *foresight* was remarkable. From the very start his thirst for knowledge was a ruling passion, until at twenty-eight years of age, the farmer's son from Pwll-cenawon stands out as the Rev. Lewis Edwards, M.A., ready for his work! But what shall it be? There is no place apparently ready for him. But he has the *insight* and the *foresight* to see that the greatest need of his people and country at the time was MEANS OF EDUCATION FOR THE MINISTRY; and he has fitted himself for the work of leading the young preachers in the paths of knowledge and truth.

BY HIS WORK AT BALA COLLEGE FOR HALF-A-CENTURY

he did the Welsh pulpit the greatest service any man could have rendered. Who can tell the influence that permeated the Principality through nigh upon a thousand preachers educated at Bala College, under the charge of so deep and sane a thinker, and so devout a Christian! It is no exaggeration to say that Dr Edwards, as

PRINCIPAL OF BALA COLLEGE,

created and trained forces for good that will run on until the Great Day of Judgment.

To his students he was not only a wise teacher, but a sincere friend and a loving father. His friendship and love were not demonstrative, but were very reliable; and the writer has personal reasons for record-

ing his debt of gratitude to his *old master* for sympathy and encouragement at a time of sore trial. He took no trouble to show his affection for the young men, for it showed itself almost unconsciously. He did not seek to *appear* kind, but to *be* so, in act and deed. In every phase of life his emphatic lesson was—*Be*, *Be*. To the ignorant and awkward, but earnest seeker of knowledge, he was always sympathetic, but woe betide the conceited! Like His Divine Master, he was "humble and lowly of heart," but if he met the shallow and swollen, he had his own way of "taking the wind" out of him—a way that was quiet but effective, and often very amusing to all except the sufferer under the wholesome treatment. Many a would-be-mighty-one was brought low, without debate or dispute, by a few words spoken partly in jest, partly in earnest, and found his level among his lesser brethren.

Dr Edwards had a very keen *sense of humour*. A devout and earnest saint, he could enjoy and partake in innocent *badinage*; and his laugh, when moved with mirth, was overpowering. The sense of personal dignity and the sense of humour were wonderfully united in him. Half of the mistakes from which humour preserves its possessor are due to the immoderate use of the logical faculty. If a man is born with a narrow mind and a love of logic, he must, without a sense of humour, become a fanatic. A sense of humour preserves those who have it from extremes. Such a one was Dr Lewis Edwards.

But great and serious as was his work at the college, he did not confine himself to this. He was always thinking of what was necessary to the extension and strengthening of the Connexion, and after he had thought of them himself, he made others think of them too. It is difficult to say how many of our great and useful institutions are due to his initiative, openly or otherwise,

for he was quite as ready to set others to do necessary work as to do it himself: he sought not the *honour* of doing good, but that the good thing was done by some one. We might instance his advocacy of a *settled pastorate*—a work in which the Rev. Edward Morgan zealously co-operated. To this can be added the starting of English causes to meet the growth of English in Wales, the Ministers' Fund, the Auxiliary Fund, together with the formation of the General Assembly of the Calvinistic Methodists for North and South Wales.

Does not all this show that he had a marvellous *insight* into the present and its needs, and an equally wonderful *foresight* into the future and its possibilities?

His Sympathy

with young men was remarkably strong. Some great men are troubled with jealousy when others appear likely to compete with them. They will bear with and even encourage those whose mediocrity constitutes no danger to themselves; but if any one appears likely to dispute the supremacy with themselves, woe to him! Like Herod of old, they will make every effort to slay those among whom there may be *a king*. Dr Edwards was at the opposite pole from these narrow great (?) ones. He delighted in, nay, he was proud of the young men of "*pairts*," and did his best to put them in the best position for honourable work and influence. He was indeed *a father* to his students: just as a father (worth the name) is never jealous of the success of his sons, so he ever delighted in the success of the young men. When he heard a young student preach, his attitude and sympathetic listening helped wonderfully; and if he preached well, a smile lit up his kindly face, joy beamed out of his eye, and he would utter a kind of

noise that is unproduceable on paper, but it meant that the "Old Doctor" was highly pleased, and said in his heart, "Well done, my boy! God bless you!" Not only so, but he would at the first opportunity, in private, speak words of cheer and encouragement, coupled with tender criticism of what he considered a weakness.

His Mental Bias

was decidedly *Platonic*. If Coleridge is right when he says that every man is born either an Aristotelian or a Platonist, then clearly Lewis Edwards was born a *Platonist*; he was deeply convinced that the roots of all things are in the spiritual and unseen, and he had a natural sympathy with the *ideas* of the "Prince of Philosophers." Hence his mind was intensely *synthetic* —ever seeking "the one among the many," and holding that "ideas" were not the fruits of experience by generalisations, but rather existed ever in the world of pure substances. How often in the class did Dr Edwards lead us out of the visible and ever-changing into the unseen and abiding on the wings of "thoughts that wander through eternity," as Milton exquisitely puts it.

It follows from this that Dr Edwards had a strong affinity with Coleridge — that great and original Christian Platonist and mystic. Both Coleridge and he were at one in their admiration of Plato; and he would have called the former a Christian expositor of the heathen (?) philosopher, and would have cordially agreed with him when he says of Plato: "This plank from the wreck of Paradise, thrown on the shores of idolatrous Greece."

At the same time he was not blind to the merits of Aristotle; and when Alexander Grant's "Ethics of Aristotle" appeared, he readily admitted—even to his students—that he had not paid sufficient attention until

then to this giant of philosophic thinking, and that he thought much more of his powers and investigations than previously, and did not wonder so much that Aristotle's works were so influential in Oxford. Dr Edwards was great enough to readily admit a mistake, and to confess a change of mind. Would there were more of such magnanimity! Still, he remained a Platonist to the end in all essentials, and always sought to trace everything to its first principles. He undoubtedly was one of the deepest thinkers: the power and keenness of his mind, together with his strong love of truth, compelled him to "dig deep." He was never satisfied with the sound of words, but went through to the realities beyond—through the court of terms and systems into the holy place of truth, and there he beheld the Shechinah of the Divine.

Intuition was very marked in him: he saw into things naturally. Not that he despised reasoning. He was one of the clearest and sanest and fullest in his reasoning faculty, and could climb logic's steep and giddy ladder without a qualm. But there are some *mysteries* that cannot be reasoned out. These must be *seen into* without opening them, else they are not seen at all. The doctor had the eye of the spiritual seer. He united in a remarkable blending the intuition of the spiritual mystic with the clear reasoning of the logician, and liked to gaze when he could no longer reason clearly—to gaze beyond the laws of logic and above the categories of reason.

"Hence in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

—WORDSWORTH.

This "calm weather" Dr Edwards often enjoyed within his inmost soul, and out of the fulness of his heart his mouth would speak.

The depth of his mind and the depth of his religion made the *mysteries* of truth most attractive to him. He delighted in the greatest and most glorious truths of the Gospel—the attributes of God, the Person of Christ, the nature of the Atonement. Among these he lived, and in them he meditated day and night. The great mysteries were his home. And it was not the least service that he rendered to the religion and to the preaching of Wales, to bring the minds of preachers and hearers to gaze upon the glory of the *great* truths of the Gospel. It is simple truth to say that he awakened the religious thought of the nation by presenting it with those truths the greatness of which are best calculated to produce such an awakening. His ministry and his teaching lifted the hearers above the common truths of religion, and above minor controversies. He led them into a new world of spiritual marvels. He carried them on towards perfection—from "the milk of babes" to the "strong meat" of the perfect—to make them healthy and strong Christians, to cause their souls to rejoice in "the fatness" of the Gospel, and to make them strong workers for Christ.

Throughout his life he remained in the same beliefs concerning the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. There was development and growth *within* the truth; but he never travelled *beyond*. If his articles upon "Cyssondeb y Ffydd" ("The Harmony of the Faith—the Proportion of the Faith," revised version) at the starting of *Y Traethodydd* in 1845 and 1846, be compared with his later writings, it will be seen that he did not, what is called by shallow thinkers, "advance with the times" in any important belief. The end of long and thoughtful years found him as Evangelical as at the beginning. Let it be clearly understood that they were years of

wide and varied reading of the theology of every age and country, and of unwearied and fearless thinking; but nothing moved his faith in the old truths. A man who has once believed and taught the doctrines of Christianity *one by one* may give up the one after the other, or the one or other, until at the end all are gone. But Dr Edwards did not thus believe them, one by one. He had dug deep until he found the eternal and immovable principle, and upon that he saw every doctrine rest; and therefore they appeared to him indissolubly joined, so that one could not be disturbed without endangering the whole building. In looking at the surface of things, men see, or think that they see, a new truth; but in the depths "the firm foundation of God standeth," and every doctrine built upon this is as steadfast and immovable as the foundation itself.

But it would be a great mistake to regard Dr Edwards as simply *a great thinker*, for he was pre-eminently "a man of affairs." In him was found the profound thinker and the practical leader, bringing excellent sense and judgment to bear upon the various circumstances of life and of religion. He saw clearly "the root of the matter." His treatment of all matters was marked by caution, prudence, and insight. What Foster said of Charles James Fox could with propriety be said of him too—"the grandeur of plain sense." No leader in Wales thought more profoundly and acted more opportunely. As has been already observed, he was "A PRACTICAL MYSTIC." Throughout his life he lived above the small differences that separate men, in close communion with the great truths that unite them. There was perfect harmony between his gentle spirit and his elevated talents. He had no desire for disputings. More desirable to him was it to emphasise these things in the presence of which divisions cease. For this cause Churchmen as well as Nonconformists, Baptists and Congregationalists

and Wesleyans, as well as Calvinistic Methodists, deeply revere his memory. Churchmen knew that he was a convinced Free Churchman, and that he never hesitated to act upon his convictions; but they also knew that he had no prejudice against other churches.

Dr Edwards's life is a standing lesson upon the best method of reaching a general influence—namely, *through the particular*. He served a whole nation by giving his very best to the denomination among whose members he was proud to number himself. Through a life comparatively retired, he influenced the highest thoughts of the Principality. By teaching about forty students per annum at the Bala College he brought an entire nation to his feet. In writing one book ("Athrawiaeth yr Iawn," "The Doctrine of the Atonement"), and a number of essays, he awakened the intellectual powers of hundreds, ay, of thousands who in their turn became teachers in their own neighbourhood. He opened the eyes of the more thoughtful to the eternal difference between the true and the false, between the real and the pretentious, and even the difference between the good, the better, and the best.

Dr Edwards as a Preacher.

We have great pleasure in this connection in quoting from a most interesting description written by Sir Edward Russell, many years ago, for the *Liverpool Daily Post*, who kindly gave us permission to make use of his article:—

"Welsh preachers have a reputation for volubility, for energy, for fervour, and for rhythmical delivery, which the present writer has had no opportunity of verifying. Occasionally Cambrian orators—and usually they have been clergymen—have exhibited in his hearing, in their own language, at public meetings, a command over the mirth and the sentiment of their countrymen which argued mother-wit and rhetorical skill in themselves, and

a sympathetic disposition in their auditors; but the genuine swing of Welsh pulpit oratory has hitherto been to this critic matter of hearsay.

"Dr Edwards, one of the most venerable and venerated pastors of the Principality, has none of the *surface* qualities which are identified with the pulpit of Wales. He is solid rather than rapturous, earnest rather than fervent; if we may say so without offence, Scotch rather than Welsh. Indeed, as he stood and preached in the Catherine Street Church on Sunday, he looked our *beau ideal* of a Covenanting divine.

"Those who have not realised a Covenanters' service on the Caledonian hill-side may, perhaps, imagine the preaching to have been very exciting. The time it occupied, however, and the style in which the old Scotch sermons were composed, forbid such a notion to be entertained. Excitement there may have been, but it is much more probable there was severe resolution, strong grasp, and steady digestion of doctrine. Human endurance could not have borne hours of wild emotion. No action or elocution could have given frothy life to preaching such as the records of the old Covenanting time have preserved for us. But the cautious, dogmatic, mystical, yet literal, exposition of well-systematised theology in its amplitude, by *dour* and determined veteran preachers, who turned neither to the right hand nor to the left for new lights, but addressed in good faith well-prepared minds, must have been, in effect, very like the discourse in which on Sunday Dr Edwards expounded the betrothal of the Church to God. We frankly own to the fascination of it. . . . Throughout there ran a rich, soft, vibrant thread of entangling and engrossing interest. One felt that one would have but to yield to the spirit of such preaching to find within it a sufficient universe of religious fact and emotion.

"Those who have not studied popular theology in a comparative, a practical, and a generous spirit, have little idea how cramped a foundation may serve to sustain, or at least may assume to sustain, a noble and ample fabric of spiritual sympathy, if only the feelings are intelligently engaged. It is commonly supposed that gentle religion

comes only of enlightenment, and that Calvinism especially is in outer darkness, and must breed conscious bitterness in its disciples. What ought logically to be we do not say, although it appears to us that Calvinism need not generate bitterness any more than Automatism, Cliffordism, Darwinism, or any other necessarian creed; but *of what is* we testify, in justice to human nature, and in justice to the universal principle of intelligent religiousness. Wherever that prevails, there is tenderness and love. It is amongst those to whom truth *is a form* and a flag, whether they be Homoousians or Homoioousians, Ritualists or Orangemen, Hyper-Calvinists or Arminians, that harshness and sourness flourish. Let reason and feeling in, and the creed cannot sour. The human mind refuses to expatiate in cruelty. It may sorrowfully acquiesce in doom, but, whatever may be said to the contrary, it takes no really sentient pleasure in 'damning one's neighbour.' Logically or illogically, piety and meditation will dwell on the milder aspects of dogma; and, if in no other way, will at least continue, *by the serene contemplation of an exceeding weight of glory*, to shut out of mind the dark doctrines of condemnation. We do not say this is rational. We do not believe that any theory on the subject yet propounded, or unconsciously adopted, is rational. But we do say that, go where you will amongst religionists where minds are really active, a spiritual *modus vivendi* of kindliness and charity prevails, which, if nothing else, is a complete and crushing answer to the philosopher who, in the teeth of facts, pretends that popular Christianity inspires hard and inhuman sentiments.

"These may seem lofty and far-fetched reflections to be suggested by a simple sermon of a Welsh divine on the 19th and 20th verses of the 2nd chapter of Hosea. But the words are a well of Puritan divinity, the water from which could not but afford to any competent analyst a true sample of Puritan religion; and the interest of Dr Edwards's sermon lay in its showing how pure the fountain still is, and how it still yields the refreshment which they most love to thousands of good Puritans in this country.

"'I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment,

and in loving-kindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord.' How the words dwell and linger in the ear! —especially in the ears which first heard Scripture amidst the associations of long-descended Puritanism! How they bring back the leafy music and the blossom scents of Sundays in quaint, old, tree-embowered meeting-houses! . . . Those who think Dissent has no sweet history shut their hearts against one-half at least of the sacred harmonies of our unexampled English (and Welsh) religious life. It is needless to hint how Dr Edwards treated his theme—to speak of the grave, unquestioning faith with which he traced the idea of espousal in the history of 'the Church,' of his calm persuasion that its introduction was an epoch; that the patriarchs had no notion of it, and merely thought themselves covenanted as servants to a master; that it first appeared in the 45th Psalm; that it formed the theme of the Song of Solomon; that it lived throughout Isaiah, was confessed by John the Baptist, and afterwards fully developed in the early Christian writings. All this may be left to the imagination. . . . What more requires to be noted is *that, in every literary quality except brilliancy, the sermon was a model.*

"Dr Edwards is an aged man. His voice is low. His throat needs frequent clearing. He has no gesture. His delivery is quiet, steady, and, except with the slightest variation towards intensity, uniform. No meritricious arts of any kind, therefore, assist him to enchain the attention. BUT HE SPEAKS AS IF THE THEOLOGY IN WHICH HE BELIEVES WERE PASSING IN A PANORAMA BEFORE HIM, AND AS IF HE, IN HALF-DREAMING INSPIRATION, WERE CALMLY UTTERING HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THE PICTURE. It interests him profoundly, and he profoundly interests those in whose hearing he recites its beauties. If it would not sound comic, we should describe him as the 'Ancient Mariner' of the pulpit. But there is nothing sensational in his story. Its burden is the assured love of adopted children, living and thinking as they are prompted by the goodness of a reconciled father. In the exposition of a theme so grand and yet

so placid, the preacher seeks no height of language, affects no singularities of thought. In English *chastened to the last degree of purity, or rather possessing a purity that is natural and needs no chastening*, this simple, venerable divine expatiates on aspects of truth which no future changes are likely to banish wholly from our country's belief and worship. Except that he has abandoned laborious divisions and sub-divisions, his sermons are as the sermons of old Puritans. Such preaching has hardly altered since the days of Howe. And for those who understand the spiritual history of the English people it must always possess an unconquerable, quiet charm, whatever may be the temporary features of the religion of the day." ("Strangers in the Pulpit," *Liverpool Daily Post*, by Sir Edward Russell.)

Such a vivid description of Dr Edwards's style of preaching by so cultured and observant a writer as Sir Edward Russell will be most acceptable to those who remember an old "master," and will give to those who never heard him a most accurate conception of his *ordinary* preaching. But there were occasions when his preaching "caught fire," and then he carried all before him, and became, indeed, "an angel flying in mid-heaven, having an eternal 'gospel' to proclaim to them that dwell upon the earth" (R.V.). When this "*earthquake*" came, all trembled—he himself, all the other ministers, and the entire congregation. Those who were privileged to be present will ever remember the "great sermons" of *Llanilar*, *Llantwit-Major*, *Aberdare*, *Bangor*, *Carnarvon*, etc.

It is with considerable diffidence that we add the following suggestion. Dr Edwards was so great a man —so clear and profound in his thoughts, so dignified and earnest in his delivery—that he could afford to dispense with all the charms of oratory. Moreover, he was so opposed to every kind of display, that he became severely simple in his public speaking. But, unwittingly, he

occasioned *style* and *oratory* to become unduly disparaged and neglected by the bulk of the preachers of his denomination. He did not need these accessories; but we who were taught by him, and are *so very much smaller in every way*, have we *done wisely* in neglecting them so much? Personally, we are profoundly convinced that the Calvinistic Methodist pulpit has not paid sufficient attention to oratory and style in its presentation of Gospel truth. No one admires more the excellency of the *matter* presented there; but the *manner* does not always do it justice. VERB. SAP.!

In Dr Edwards's eminent son—Principal Thomas Charles Edwards—was found the deep, clear thinking of the father, joined with a fervent and all-powerful oratory which made him, in the words of his tutor Jowett, "a logician on fire." He is a signal proof of how powerful the best *matter* may become when it is put in the best *manner* by a "master of assemblies."

Dr Edwards as a Writer.

Great prominence must be given to his work as an author, for his writings mark an epoch and connote a change in Welsh religious literature. It is no exaggeration to say that he created a new era in Wales. All felt that a new light and a new power had entered into our literature. Hundreds of readers had their eyes opened upon a new world and new visions, among which they have lived ever since. He led many for the first time into the company of "the great masters" of thought in the various ages and countries of the world, and into the green pastures of the best literature. To their surprise they discovered that there was something besides, and even greater than Wales and its bards, the Eisteddfod and the twenty-four metres, the denominational magazines, and the con-

troversies of "*The Five Points.*" The *Traethodydd* particularly purified the literary taste of hundreds of Welsh readers, and raised the standard very high. It is not too much to say that he set up a new and higher standard of excellence, and introduced a new code of critical laws. He taught his readers to appreciate substance rather than sound, thoughts rather than words, and to distinguish clearly between true learning and the false. He showed them the beauty of a simple and pure style—a sure proof of a sound education. He taught many to believe that simplicity was a sure sign of greatness, and lay at the root of mental superiority.

Y Traethodydd.

It was in 1845 that he started this periodical, "The Essayist," as a quarterly, upon the plan of the then best English reviews (*The North British Review*, etc.). The two first joint-editors were Dr Edwards and the Rev. Roger Edwards—a pioneer of Welsh periodical literature and the editor of *Y Drysorfa* (*The Treasury*), the Calvinistic Methodist monthly organ, for half-a-century. Dr Edwards was chief editor from 1845 to 1855 or 1856, when he had to give it up owing to the pressure of college work, etc. The Rev. Owen Thomas, D.D., was appointed joint-editor with the Rev. Roger Edwards. Mr Gee, of Denbigh, the eminent Welsh publisher and nationalist, published it at his own expense for many years. These three devoted men—Lewis Edwards, Roger Edwards, and Thomas Gee—were possessed by the same spirit: an intense desire to enlighten and lift up the people of Wales, and *Y Traethodydd* will ever remain a monument to their enlightened patriotism. (We are glad to add that it still remains alive, and vigorous. May its days be long in the land!)

It will not be uninteresting if we put down the names of the contributors to the first volume (1845):—Dr Edwards, 11 articles; Roger Edwards, 6; Eben Fardd, 4; Dr Charles, 4; Ellis Owen, Cefn-y-meusydd, 4; Dr John Parry, 3; Henry Rees, 2; David Jones, Treborth, 2; John Phillips, Bangor, 2; John Hughes, Pontrobert, 2; Morris Hughes, Felinheli, 2; Dr Owen Thomas, 2; Richard Jones, Llanfair, 2; Morris Davies, Bangor, 2; and Rev. John Hughes, The Mount, Liverpool; David Charles, Carmarthen; Glan Alun; John Owen, Tynllwyn; E. W. Richard, London; Eryron Gwyllt Walia (Rev. Robert Owen, London); Richard Humphreys, Dyffryn; Lewis Jones, Bala; Ebenezer Powell, Holt; and James Williams, Brittany, 1 each. A noble array of good men, all Calvinistic Methodists. In the second volume Christmas Evans and Dr William Rees ("Gwilym Hiraethog") wrote; and ever since its writers come from all denominations. To estimate the good it has done is impossible, not only to one section, but to the whole nation; not the least among them were the working classes—the farmers and quarrymen, etc. Its quarterly appearance was eagerly looked for; its articles were carefully read, and warmly discussed during the dinner-hour, and at home in the long winter evenings. Its strong meat made strong men of its readers: "There were giants in those days." Do the working classes of Wales to-day maintain the high standard of their fathers and grandfathers?

Dr Edwards's articles cover a wide ground, and show that his reading was extensive and varied, and his judgment fair and liberal. Here is a list of the subjects:—"Cyssondeb y Ffydd" ("The Harmony of the Faith")—a series of four articles, to which we may again refer; "History of the Church at Geneva," "The Daughters of Wales," "The Inspiration of the Bible," "The Life and Thoughts of Dr Arnold," "The Telegraph," "The

Theological Controversies of Scotland" (2 articles), "Maynooth," "The Free Kirk," "The Established Church and the Nonconformists," "The Evangelical Union," "The Corn Laws," "Coleridge's Philosophy and Theology," "Trevecca College," "Notes on Liverpool," "General Education," "National Religion and Personal Religion," "The Writings of Morgan Llwyd," "Education in Wales," "The Awakening," "The Report of the Welsh Commissioners," "The French Revolution," "The Horrors of War," "The Periodicals of Wales" (2 articles), "Paradise Lost," "Luther's Hymn," "Mr Johns, *The Quarterly Review*, and Sir Thomas Phillips," "Hymn-Changers," "The Remedy," "The Catholic Aggression," "Goethe," "The Earnest Expectation of the Creature," "The Welsh Poets," "Logic," "Jones of Ramoth and Sandemanianism," "Dafydd Ionawr," "The Welsh Puseyites," "Hector and Andromache," "Kant's Philosophy" (2 articles), etc., etc. The last written by him for *Y Traethodydd* was in 1858—subject, "The Covenant of Works and Original Sin." This list fully justifies the remark that he was a wide-read scholar, and a keen but unprejudiced thinker.

And be it remembered that all this editing and writing and soliciting articles from others was carried on amid the increasing demands of the college and the "Association." Carlyle—is it not?—defines genius as "the infinite capacity of taking trouble." By this standard Lewis Edwards was indeed a *genius* "of the first magnitude."

We must recur to his articles on "Cyssondeb y Ffydd." Many competent critics regard these as among his very best. Thus writes one of the sanest:—

"We feel sure that nothing has appeared in Welsh theological literature that has produced so deep an impression upon the thoughtful readers of the nation, of all denominations, as these articles. Their root-principle, as will be remembered, is 'Contrasted Truths.' . . . It

is shown that every truth consists of two opposite proportions, which, like the stones in the arch of the bridge although in appearance opposing, are in reality supporting one another, and meet in a higher unity, in which, as in a key-stone, they stand together in strength and beauty. Dr Edwards gives beautiful instances of this principle in nature, morals, and politics. Then he applies this in a series of the most masterful articles, perhaps, ever written in the Welsh language upon theology. There are but few things or persons great enough to create an era in the history of the world. Most men are the product of their age, and not its creators. But there can be no doubt that these articles created a new period in the theology and the preaching of Wales. Instead of trivial controversies concerning words and conceptions upon the surface, Dr Edwards dug into a deeper vein of thought, to eternal principles, and traced the connection and inter-dependence. He showed how one truth shone in the light of another, and how all were rooted in the depth of the Divine nature and Divine counsel, and all centred in the person and work of the God-man. . . . He brought in a *novum organum* —a new method—into theology in Wales" (Dr Griffith Parry).

The truths he would have his readers consider in the light of this principle (of contrasted truths) he subsequently discusses—"The Freedom of the Will," "The Eternal Predestination," "Original Sin," "The Necessity and Nature of the Atonement," "The Fulness of the Atonement," and "Justification."

All these articles, that originally appeared in *Y Traethodydd* from 1845 to 1858, were subsequently, together with later articles sent to other monthlies and weeklies, published in two large volumes as "Theological Essays" and "Literary Essays."

But perhaps the work by which he will be best remembered—his *magnum opus*—is the

"*Athrawiaeth yr Iawn*"

("The Doctrine of the Atonement") published originally as one of "Y Gyfres Gymraeg" ("The Welsh Series"). This excellent and masterly work is in the form of a dialogue between a disciple and his master, and is divided by the author as follows:—

1. Introductory remarks.
2. The Doctrine of the Atonement in its relation to God.
3. The Doctrine of the Atonement in its relation to the Person of Christ.
4. The Doctrine of the Atonement in its relation to Man.
5. The Doctrine of the Atonement in its relation to the History of the Church.

The appearance of this book created a revolution in the opinions of many in the Principality upon theological subjects, and made a very deep impression upon thoughtful and unprejudiced men in all denominations. So calm and fair a discussion of so controversial a subject was a new thing in Wales. And more than that was the wide reading and bold penetrating into the very depths of philosophy and theology. It is difficult to know which to wonder at most—the exactness or the width of the argument, the independence of original thinking or the thorough acquaintance with the maturest thoughts of the greatest divines of all ages upon this momentous truth.

The whole treatment is so masterly and new, that the author seems to travel unknown territories, and to relate new discoveries. It is indeed a *monumental work* —a GREAT BOOK, although but a small volume. An English translation of it has been brought out by his son, the Rev. D. C. Edwards, M.A.

Another work of his ranking high is "Hanes Duwinyddiaeth" ("The History of Theology"), written as an introduction to a new edition of Dr Lewis's "Body of

Divinity." The subjects dwelt upon are these:—"The Bible and Religion—Religion and Doctrine—Doctrine and Theology — Theology and System — An Attempt to incorporate the Ideas — Recapitulation — History of Theology—The Greek Fathers—The Latin Fathers—The Theologians of the Middle Ages—The Protestant Reformation—The Methodist Reformation." Two things are very evident in this treatise: (*a*) His power to put much in little, and (*b*) his success in making all clear and full. You will find here a sea of thought in a drop of language, and all put in as simple and clear a style as the beauty of a dewdrop, that can image a whole sun.

To all this, it may be added that Dr Edwards was a poet of undoubted ability, and was oftener asked to adjudicate at the National Eisteddfod than he was able to comply. It may surprise some to know that he composed a poetical work of over 500 lines upon the subject, "Cysgod a Sylwedd" ("Shadow and Substance"), of which poetical judges speak very highly, and an "Awdl" on "Trefn Duw i Gadw Gyn" ("God's Plan of Salvation"), as well as many shorter pieces, and many excellent translations, *e.g.* Cowper's "God moves in a mysterious way," etc.

Those who have done us the honour of reading so far will now agree that we did not exaggerate when we affirmed that among "Welsh leaders" Lewis Edwards stands among the foremost, if not indeed the *greatest* of them all. Once more, we remark that Dr Edwards served his country thus by giving his own immediate circles his very best; and thus he became A PEOPLE'S TREASURE rather than a sect's ornament. It may be that other men were more national in some respects, moved in more visible circles with more apparent energy. But Wales never had a warmer and more devoted son.

He loved his nation wisely *because he loved God best.* We will conclude with words which we often heard from him :—

"BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A GOD, AND THAT THERE IS AN ETERNITY."

Principal THOMAS CHARLES EDWARDS, M.A., D.D.

By the Rev. J. PULESTON JONES, M.A.

It is not expected that these sketches should be to any large extent biographical; and in the case of Principal Charles Edwards, the element of biography can be safely reduced to a minimum. His life, full and manifold though it was, was the furthest possible from being what so many lives are, the resultant of competing interests, not one of which is clearly supreme. His was emphatically a life in which a guiding and unifying principle can easily be found. The one central fact about him was, that he was a great preacher. He was, of course, much besides; but this fact was the pivot round which all else revolved. He was a pastor for less than a fourth of his public career; but he was more of a preacher than he was of anything else to the very end. In his own country he is known as a prominent figure in the educational struggles of his time, but his place there was not won in the educational field, but in the pulpit.

Thomas Charles Edwards was born at Bala in 1837 and died in 1900, so that his life just fell, by a few months, within Queen Victoria's reign. He was the son of Lewis Edwards, and, on his mother's side, the great-grandson of Thomas Charles. After repeatedly making a start with successive generations of students, he at last joined the college in good earnest—the college which his father had founded, and which he preferred to call a school.

The Rev. Thomas Charles Edwards, M.A., D.D. [*To face p.* 356

A personality so rich had, doubtless, deep roots in the past, and numberless points of attachment to the present in which he lived; yet what he said at the induction of a young minister, who also came of a family of preachers, was eminently true of himself. "We must all be spiritual Melchizedecs." Hence it was with Thomas Charles Edwards as it was with St Paul. The spiritual crisis—we will not say his conversion, for that was probably earlier—the crisis which kindled his zeal into an unslumbering flame—was a vastly more potent factor in his life than either birth or training. It took place in the Revival of 1859, under the ministry, as seems most probable, of his uncle, Thomas Edwards of Pen-llwyn. The nephew, in telling the story, usually described the preacher to whom he owed this awakening as "a man of God from Cardiganshire"; and this has led many to assume that he must have been David Morgan of Yspyty Ystwyth, the principal figure in that Revival. The mistake was a very natural one to make, the more so because Principal Edwards never missed an opportunity of saying strong things about what he owed to David Morgan. David Morgan had visited Bala, of course, but that was after the Revival had begun to be felt there, and to radiate thence to the country round.[1]

According to the biographical sketch at the close of the volume of the Principal's sermons, he took his London M.A. before going to Oxford, which he did in 1862. Before he had been there long, he took a scholarship at Lincoln College. The tradition at Oxford is, that he won his first class in *literæ humaniores* on his philosophy rather than

[1] My authority for this statement is Mr William Jones of Port-dinorwig, who wrote reminiscences in the *Cenedl* for 3rd April 1900. Mr Jones heard Thomas Edwards on that occasion. The text was Jeremiah viii. 20. And Mr Jones's view agrees with a lecture on Thomas Edwards by Griffith Davies of Cardigan. Mr Davies also said it was Thomas Edwards who carried the Revival to Bala. To quote Mr Jones once more, "Hitherto the Revival had been to the students only a matter of rumour and report—the Cardiganshire Revival or David Morgan's Revival."

on his scholarship; but although scholarship was not deemed to be his strong point then, the Oxford training left a deep mark upon his habits as a student. He spared no pains to get at the exact expression of the truth as he saw it.

Before he had finished his course at Oxford he undertook home-mission work among the navvies on the Tenby and Pembroke Railway, and preached to them during his vacations. He was ordained at the Llansawel Association in 1864. Windsor Street, Liverpool, an English church, enjoyed his ministry from 1866 to 1872. He married in 1867. I have heard it stated by an intimate friend of his that the honeymoon was spent in visiting a series of English cathedral towns. It was just like him. Though a sturdy Nonconformist, Thomas Charles Edwards had none of the provincialism which dissent from the Established Church is supposed to carry with it. Shortly before Mrs Edwards's death, they visited Italy together, and the Principal thought it a great misfortune not to have been there earlier. Though a Welshman to the core, he did not think you could best serve Wales by isolating her from the rest of the world. He seems to have found pastoral work inspiring, for I heard him tell, in a conference on that branch of the ministry, how he had often left his study on a Saturday afternoon with the sermon unfinished, and how, after hours of visiting, he would come back to the sermon to find its difficulties all dispelled.

As everybody knows, he was the first Principal of Aberystwyth; and he held the office from 1872 until his removal to Bala in 1891.

The University College, Aberystwyth, was the first institution of its exact kind ever planted in Wales; for St David's College, Lampeter, had its special connections with the Church of England and with Jesus College, Oxford. Principal Edwards taught Greek and Philosophy for a time, till his duties as head of the college became so

pressing and frequent that he had to be partially released from professorial work. His name, however, was of more consequence to the college than his work as a teacher. In those early days, before the college had made itself a name, and before the other professors had become known to Wales, as they have become since, the Principal's name was the great attraction. The fact that the new college had a great preacher for its head made the institution dear to all. The people loved it because they trusted him. He was surrounded by professors who were his equals, and some of them more than his equals, in the inside work of the college; but as a representative of the college in the popular mind he stood for years quite alone. The pick and cream of the nation in Church and State, in business and in the professions, passed through Aberystwyth in the seventies and the early eighties. When Government decided to have two university colleges for Wales, at Bangor and at Cardiff, it was for a time doubtful whether Aberystwyth would be a constituent college of the future University at all. It had to fight for its existence, and it was mainly the influence of the Principal that saved it. Under the same strong hand it held its way, and flourished even better under the pressure of healthy competition with the other colleges. And when the fire occurred which created the need of a collection for the building, the Principal devoted all the energy of his vigorous nature to the work, and held five hundred and twenty meetings in the session 1886 and 1887. Interest in the college was reawakened. The insurance money and the restoration fund more than covered the loss. The restored building far surpassed the first, which had been very ill suited for its purpose. New scholarships were founded, and beside guiding and stimulating the liberality of others, Principal Edwards helped students lavishly out of his own purse. Thus the fire which had threatened to blight the prospects of the institution proved to be an almost unmixed good.

When Principal Edwards removed to Bala, he was able, by the same weight of personality which had won previous battles, to lead the Calvinistic Methodists of North Wales through a great change in a marvellously short time. He got his ideas accepted, not by dint of any skill in the arts of the ecclesiastic—he had never much ambition that way—nor yet altogether by convincing his brethren in debate, but simply by the bare fact that he was felt to be indispensable. Some points in his scheme, as, for instance, the admission on equal terms of students belonging to other churches, were accepted under a murmured protest, but accepted still. While in other Welsh colleges the transition from the mixed or grammar school stage to the purely theological type of institution was achieved gradually, in the case of Bala College it was achieved at a stroke, and probably Principal Edwards was the only man living who could have made the achievement. People felt that if they wanted to prosper in the undertaking they must accept him and his ideas; and the result proves him to have been right.

Now all this power over his fellow-countrymen was mainly the power of a preacher in a country where a good preacher is sure of a constituency. His preaching absorbed into itself all the resources of his rich mind and his imperious will; and it yielded him in return a ripe harvest of power, which served many good ends beside those directly connected with his pulpit work. Where, then, lay the hiding of his power? What was it that made him the preacher that he was?

It was certainly not the absence of small defects and disadvantages. Of these he had his full share. He avoided consciously some things which go to make the charm of Welsh oratory—the minor intonation for example; and he had none of the ecclesiastical lilt that forms its counterpart in the English pulpit. He had not many of the graces of style in English or Welsh. He did not know the literature

of either language as his father did. He probably read more of general literature during the sad and weary years of failing health than he had ever done in his life for any similar period. There were, no doubt, a few odd exceptions to this statement. Of Artemus Ward, for example, he had always been fond; but on the whole, although he was an insatiable collector of books, his reading must have been confined for the most part to subjects in which he was an expert. This was not due to lack of relish for literature, but simply a matter of habit closely connected with his consuming devotion to his great work. When he did touch literature, as, for instance, when he lectured on William Salisbury, he did it with rare skill and appreciation, only it was not a line that he often took. Though a prince among Biblical theologians, Thomas Charles Edwards rarely recited a long quotation from Scripture; nor did he frequently quote at all without reading the quotation. In this respect he formed a distinct exception among the preachers of the front rank in his age and country. Owen Thomas, John Thomas, and John Hughes, owed much of their charm to their rare skill in using the exact words of the Welsh Bible. And when the actual words were not there, the flavour was. Gestures Principal Edwards had in abundance—in superabundance, some might say; but these did not escape criticism. Like so many other popular preachers, he was frequently described by guardians of pulpit decorum as too theatrical; while to those, with whom the artistic interest outweighs the moral, his passion seemed overdone. As far as there was truth in this latter criticism, it was due, I suspect, to the fact that the preacher had once felt all the burning passion that his voice and manner expressed, but that he reproduced the same signs of feeling in subsequent deliveries of the sermon, when the temperature in himself and in his hearers was not quite so high.

But the greatest disadvantage of all was that his health

gave way just when he was arriving at that period of his life at which a great man has earned the right to set his own standards. Among many good things in an essay by Mr John Owen which accompanies Edwards's sermons, there is this remark: "Principal Edwards had to teach his hearers, and to train the taste for his own preaching." Now just when he had succeeded in doing this, he was withdrawn. Who can tell how much of his greatness many a great man owes to the fact that his strength has been spared for many years after he has reached, not only maturity of power, but maturity of influence? Gladstone would not have been the Gladstone now known to history if he had died or lost his health at fifty-five. The period between the time when a man is too young to be allowed to do his best and the time when he is too old to be able to do it, is often a very short one, and when it happens to be prolonged into old age, the gain is very marked. Principal Edwards broke down just when people were opening their eyes to his true worth. He never enjoyed, as his father did, a season of unquestioned authority. For the last twenty years of his life Lewis Edwards was the object of such hero-worship with the men who had grown up around him, that it was deemed a sign either of intellectual defect or of moral depravity for any one to attempt to criticise him. Thomas Charles Edwards never wielded precisely that kind of influence. He was about forty-six when he delivered the ordination charge at Mold. I remarked to a friend of his that the Principal was much criticised for departing from his almost unvarying rule, and reading his address. The friend replied, "It was safer for a young man." Before another ten years had passed over him, the Principal had begun to fail. He felt the tragedy of the situation keenly. He said once at the close of one of the Saturday morning conferences on preaching—and those who heard him will never forget the pathos in his broken utterances, for he seemed to econo-

mise words in order to husband his strength to say them—"Preach as well as you can: you never know when you may be stopped."

These drawbacks, however, only prove his real greatness; for in spite of them he must be ranked with the greatest preachers. God often gives the highest inspiration, not to the best balanced natures, but to those which have a strong current. A tilt in a certain definite direction seems more favourable to power than faultless equilibrium. It is clearly so with the power of the pulpit. Here, at least, a man who studies men and movements from the outside can have little hope of success.

Now one of the ground requisites of a great preacher, it will be readily admitted, is a broad, robust, catholic, responsive, human nature. The capacity for being influenced by others is as vital as the power of influencing them; for the soul of a good sermon lies very often in that indefinable something which comes into existence when the preacher faces his audience. The conditions for its realisation may be contrived beforehand, but the thing itself must be somewhat of a surprise to the preacher no less than to the congregation. It is a certain transformation of thought and feeling, which takes place whenever a man becomes a conductor of spiritual force. You cannot trace it any more than the ruler of the feast at Cana could tell whence the wine came. All, in fact, that the closest observers of the miracle could say was, that the water had become wine somewhere in the process of pouring from vessel to vessel. Lonely as Principal Edwards's life in some respects was, he was nevertheless just the type of character best fitted to impress and be impressed. People took to him, and took against him readily. He would hit hard in controversy. He had strong likes and dislikes. Yet, with all this, he was, especially in his later years, proverbially forgiving. He was generous in this and every other sense of the word. No one ever cared less for

money. Particular cases of his kindness to needy students have from time to time leaked out, but its extent will probably never be known. His gifts in hard cash were astonishingly numerous and large.

When a preacher has this broad human sympathy as a basis, little defects of technique do not count, and in the case of Edwards it told upon the matter and the manner of his preaching. The ground plan of his oratory, notwithstanding its high flights of passion, was conversational. Unlike many Welsh preachers, he was animated from the start. Even the quiet parts of the sermon had an emphasis which made you feel that he was talking to you personally. His delivery had no beaten path, no periodic round upon which you might reckon. He would sometimes speak all the way through in a conversation key, and was never more effective, perhaps, than he was in some of these instances. I have seen him hold an open-air audience spellbound by just speaking audibly, but with a minimum of voice inflexion. More frequently, he would let himself go with every shade of feeling, now raising his voice to a shout of triumph, now depressing it to a tone of withering scorn or of melting tenderness, but always in such a way that the road was left open to slip back at any moment into the conversation voice. The transition from the most violent bursts of denunciation back into the argumentative strain was always perfectly easy. You never felt that there was an awkward break.

He used to say of himself that he was not born like his father, a man of genius. If we think of genius merely as something intellectual, and especially if we think mainly of the gift of writing, the observation may have been as true as it was modest, but, as Mr William Hobley has well said, the difference between father and son was far less than is commonly supposed ; and Thomas Charles Edwards far surpassed his father in

the power of taking pains. And besides, he had one admitted characteristic of genius in greater measure than even his father had it—the fusion of thought and feeling. Dr Lewis Edwards disclosed a rare amount of this quality sometimes in class, more rarely in the pulpit, whereas his son rarely preached without showing some signs of its presence. This fusion of the intellectual and the emotional was what enabled him to rivet the interest of an untrained audience on discussions which, without it, they would have felt to be intolerably dry. And this he did, as Sir Edward Russell pointed out long ago, without turning aside from his theme to entertain, or even to arrest his hearers. The sermon which Sir Edward had heard when he wrote his description was the sermon on Judas. There are, he said, preachers, such as Moody and Spurgeon, who tell a pathetic anecdote about some incident in our daily life expecting that the pathos of the situation will somehow transfer itself into the spiritual sphere; "but with Mr Edwards the pathos is in the spiritual situation itself."[1] He held his audience and his subject in one and the same grip, and he did it by reason of the fire that was shut up within his bones. The poet has an acknowledged power of making words mean more to us than they would have meant in an ordinary context or on ordinary lips. The poet has something in common with less favoured natures, which bridges the intellectual chasm between him and them, and makes the meanest disciple feel that he understands him even when he cannot follow the master's thinking step by step. The highest type of oratory has the same virtue. It makes men aware of a presence which they cannot describe. It makes them realise with sufficient clearness, for practical ends, truths which they have neither the intelligence nor the training

[1] I have had to content myself with a rough paraphrase, because I have not been able to find the article.

to put into words, nay, which they would hardly have recognised as part of their spiritual heritage, had they read them in a book. The preacher must have something to impart to plain men and women which they would not be likely to get in so available a form through any other channel. The greater the preacher, the more there will be in him of that subtle quality which makes the difference between hearing a sermon and reading a book.

But if a characteristic note in a preacher's ministry is to leave an abiding mark upon his age, it must be more than a matter of mood or even of temperament; and this the quality we have attributed to Principal Edwards certainly was. His humanism — if we may borrow a word recently imported from literature into philosophy—was a matter of conviction. It moulded the message as well as the utterance. You caught indications now and then, though oftener in his writings than in his sermons, that his mind was quite capable of that subtilty which we associate with the theology of the Middle Ages; but his humanism was so predominant that it drove this tendency of his intellect entirely out of sight in all his best work. It led him to brush aside with impatience all that did not belong to the heart of his subject. For preachers who make more than one use of the same text in the same sermon he had little tolerance. He expected a preacher to choose one interpretation of a passage, and to pin his applications loyally to that. Principal Edwards did not spare his hearers the trouble of hard thinking and close reasoning, but he took care nearly always not to trouble them with any but the main lines of the argument. He forms a complete contrast to those preachers whose interest is primarily in the body of truth they have to proclaim, but who remind themselves at intervals, in the preparation of the discourse, that truth ought to have an application,

and then proceed to apply it as a matter of duty. With Principal Edwards the application was usually in full view from beginning to end. If he did not want to apply a piece of exegesis, he simply let it alone and did not think it worth his while to spend five minutes over it. If he dwelt at all on the Pauline maxim, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God," he would go on to give it a present day meaning. "Methodism is nothing; opposition to Methodism is nothing; to be good is everything." His faith in the human heart, and its power of recognising truth, was quite Apostolic. All that needed to be done to make truth acceptable was to strip it of its scholastic trappings, and show it in its native majesty. This he did with a power all his own.

This faith in humanity crystallised into classical expression in a sermon on the "Fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22-23): "The boundless possibility of growth in grace." "Every man has not in him the makings of a poet, but every man can be a saint; the topmost heights of saintliness are within the reach of all. . . . Against the fruit of the Spirit there is no law." "Love, joy, peace, that is religion on its Godward side. Long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, that is religion in its relation to men. Faith, meekness, self-control, that is religion in its relation to ourselves. And this is the right order—religion toward God first, then religion toward others; then, when the Christian life has established itself in those two realms, I shall be able to rule the little kingdom within." "Take a sample of these graces—faith. It does not mean exactly saving faith, faith in the technical sense, but the power of believing in general. There are persons who are constitutionally sceptics. They can believe nothing unless they can measure it, and look over it, and under it, and behind it, and all round it—unless they can compress it and reduce it till

it is so small that it is not worth believing. Try to believe something. Believe in yourself, if you cannot rise higher. Believe in man; it will bring you half-way to believing in the God-man."

It is clear, then, that the sympathy with humanity in its upward strivings, so characteristic of the man—welling out as it did in acts of kindness, and ringing forth in his tempestuous laughter—was at once the element in which his faith grew, and the best medium for its expression. Faith in the salvability of man was the form which his faith in the Gospel most readily, and most frequently, assumed. Every preacher worthy of the name must have, in one shape or another, the conviction that the Gospel is the one thing needful for men, and that it is enough. "I know that His commandment is life everlasting." Every good preacher, from the Master down, has had such a conviction. But to some it presents itself as a belief in the Omnipotence of God, to others as a sense of the tragedy of human life, to others as the outcome of philosophic despair. To Principal Edwards it was a passionate belief that man's native relation to God was such as to make salvation possible. The belief, it is needless to say, was bound up with a passion of loyalty to the Redeemer's Person. The neglected aspect of the truth—that is to say, the humanity of Jesus—attracted him as it has attracted so many modern theologians, only that with him the doctrine was never permitted to obscure the Godhead of our Lord. He held that the Logos was human before He became flesh. This doctrine, which he did not always sufficiently safeguard from misapprehension, and which made many good people think of him as a dangerous innovator, was one of his permanent contributions to Welsh theology, the best perhaps. The heart and kernel of it is just this, that the possibility of incarnation lay in God from the first. Whether it would have been made actual if

man's needs had not been what they are, we may decline to speculate; but that the possibility was always there we must assuredly hold. It was there, bound up with the very possibility of creation itself. Christ is the first-born of creation—of all creation—the beginning of a family in the Godhead. Only such a God as could reveal Himself as man could really come out of Himself in any act of creation at all. The possibility of creation and the possibility of incarnation are one. It lies in the fact that God is from everlasting, not only Father, but Son as well. Now, the credit of having made this doctrine popular in Wales belongs to Principal Edwards. We may criticise this or that detail in his way of presenting it, but the solid gain to our theology, from the conception which he popularised among us, should make us grateful for ever that he was enabled to give so rich a truth the expression he did. His Davies Lecture, "The God-man," read hurriedly, looks too much like a table of contents. You feel you would like to stop the writer often and ask him a question; but read it again once or twice, and once at least in the maturer Welsh edition; read one or two of the books to which reference is made; and you will wonder then how so much reading and so much thinking have, in spite of broken health, been compressed into so small a compass.

But the easiest way of illustrating Edwards's Christology will be to quote a few aphorisms from his sermons, with just so much of the context as may be necessary to make them intelligible. The quotations shall be some from memory, some from the volume of reported Welsh sermons.

"'Now we see not yet all things put under him (that is, man), but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.' (Heb. ii. 8-9.) If men were lost, man is saved. Humanity is already saved in Christ."

"'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' How shall we escape?—(1) Because Christ is the Son of God; (2) because Christ is man. We cannot afford to neglect anything human."

"'The form of a servant.' 'Made in the likeness of men.' What we have here is not 'The Word made flesh,' but made very like a man. He was man: nay, more. He was God made like unto man—His Divinity fashioned upon a human model instead of a Divine; praying instead of being the hearer of prayer; born Himself instead of being the author of life; dying instead of causing the death of His creatures; yes, God, the Logos, dying, so that He lives now as though He were only man. He was more than man; He was God-man; but the form of existence is such as if He had been nothing but man."

"'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.' The point is not that the Son of God is unchanging. God has no yesterday and to-day. He does not live in time: time lives in Him." "He is Jesus Christ. It is that Jesus of Nazareth who is changeless. There are changeless elements in His humanity. He developed into changelessness. It was not that the man Christ Jesus had an unchanging Divine nature. He kept forming His character exactly as other good men, and even bad men do." "He never missed His path. He never once repented. He never in the least desired to make a second start. Yet there is in Him an evolution." "His life, like His robe, is seamless." "He has reached the most complete steadfastness the world has ever seen. He is fit for the kingdom of heaven, and worthy of it. He has put His hand to the plough, and does not look back."

In these quotations the accent falls on the human side of our Lord's person. They might be copiously paralleled by rich teachings concerning His Divinity, as, for instance, in the great sermon on "Come unto me"; but Thomas Charles Edwards was, on that side, simply following up lines laid down by other teachers, and by

none more clearly than by Lewis Edwards. Indeed the Christocentric method of Charles Edwards's theology is not more his than his father's, only that Thomas Charles Edwards pushed it further, and made a much bolder use of it on the human side.

His Christ-centred humanism had one result which he did not contemplate—a negative result, if you like, but a very important one all the same. It made theology independent of the doctrine of inspiration. He theorised little, if any at all, upon the subject of inspiration. He loved his Bible with all the fervour that had marked his predecessors. He had all the modern distrust of system-building, when it is untested by sound exegesis. He used to say that the difference between a good Biblical scholar and a good theologian was very small. Among the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales the freedom to preach the Bible, as Goleufryn called it, to preach the Bible without dreading collision with the traditional dogmatics, was won, I suspect, earlier than among their evangelical brethren in England and Scotland and America. It had already been won, in fact, by John Jones of Talysarn and William Roberts of Amlwch. In this particular point Dr Lewis Edwards only gave to their method the sanction of his scholarship, and reduced it to theory and system. But Thomas Charles Edwards was the first to make his Gospel independent, not, of course, of the Bible, but of theories about the Bible. There had always been more or less of a circle in the argument of orthodox Protestantism. The doctrine of inspiration was at once the ultimate warrant for all doctrines, as far as they could be said to have an objective warrant at all, and itself also one of the doctrines to be proved. The inspiration of Scripture was at once part of the foundation, and part of the building reared upon it. Now, whatever we may think of this position as a matter of theory, it was obviously a fatal weakness for the purposes of apologetics; and Principal

Edwards had, from first to last, a strong vein of apologetics in his preaching. Whether it was through the exigencies of the situation, or simply through the overmastering hold which the Person and the Spirit of Christ had of his mind, he got rid of this difficulty in popular Protestantism. He made it possible for men to cling to their faith in Christ without waiting to see every Biblical problem settled. Christ, and the mind of Christ in the Church, which meant to him, as he was never tired of repeating, the intellect of Christ, was competent to settle all questions for you, if you are a Christian. Hence, you could fearlessly await the issue of critical enquiries, and of scientific research. Only be sure you make up your mind about Christ first. This, if I mistake not, was the half-conscious logic of Edwards's method; and it made him the prophet of a new era in Welsh theology. And once more in the history of our country, because a great preacher happened to be on the progressive side, the battle is likely to be won with less friction and with fewer heresy-hunts than it has cost to win it in some other lands. Welsh theology among all the churches had been Bibliocentric. With Lewis Edwards and Principal David Charles Davies, the practical inerrancy of Scripture had been a postulate. David Charles Davies in particular regarded the authority of the Bible as setting a limit to the freedom of his restless and brilliant intellect, much in the same way that a Catholic divine thinks of himself as free to exercise his reason within the bounds prescribed by the Church. Without any theory on the subject, Thomas Charles Edwards broke through this constraint. Thus it was that the very same thing made him a subject of anxious concern to conservative minds and a tower of refuge to the young. The refuge he offered from the bondage of the letter, in the freedom of the spirit, was all the more welcome, because everybody knew that he was as loyal to the Bible as any of the Welsh fathers had been.

What young men and women who have begun to think for themselves want, is a message. They will hardly thank you for re-ornamenting the messages of the past. Those whose habits and opinions are fixed, will welcome the restatement of what they know already, put into more attractive shapes than they could have given it; but the young will pass over much imperfection in the preacher's art, provided they are persuaded that he has faced their difficulties fairly, and that he has a message for them. The generation which has just reached middle age had such a preacher in Principal Edwards. Some of us thought that he over-estimated the significance of the doubts that were in the air. A fuller acquaintance with our age has shown us that we were wrong, and he was right.

The Word of the Lord came to him, as it came to the prophets of old, in the thick of his work, in the midst of daily contact with affairs. He studied eternal truth in hand-to-hand conflict with the questions of the hour, just as an astronomer learns the abiding laws of the heavenly bodies, by watching their changes of position. He read eternity by interpreting the signs of the times. His theology was evolved in the process of making sermons and preaching them. I say of preaching them, because the sermon with him was not always, if indeed it was generally, a finished product. It often took shape in actual utterance, and after several repetitions reached a certain amount of fixity, though the points were quite distinct from the first. He once told an interesting bit of the natural history of a sermon to a company of friends who were driving with him from a village anniversary to the neighbouring town. "I was told," he said, "by a friend who had heard me preach in Liverpool: 'Your sermon was preached in America a couple of Sundays ago, and has been sent us in a letter.' I thought it strange, for I knew I had not stolen it. After a moment's thinking, I

recollected that, a very few weeks before, I had given an informal and half-impromptu address at a meeting where an American friend was present. When I had gone to bed, it occurred to me that some of the observations I had made were rather good, and that they would make a sermon. My American friend must have thought the same."

The reaction of preaching on theology was with Edwards a cardinal point of theory. He expressed it in his ordination charge at Pwllheli. It must have been in 1891. The text was Romans i. 14, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." "How was St Paul a debtor to all the classes of his day? What was it that made him feel indebted to them? Because it was in preaching the Gospel to them that he had learnt what the Gospel meant. He observed the change which the Gospel of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ wrought in the lives of men, and then set himself to enquire how it came about. He might have had a gospel without this experience of what Christianity did for men, but without it he would not have reduced his gospel to a system. He would not have gained his insight into the method by which the Gospel did its work. We should have had none of the great epistles without his experience as a missionary." Of course, only a ragged summary can be given at this distance of time, and one is hardly sure whether one is not mixing up words of one's own with the original ; but the thought, so fresh, so simple, and delivered as it was with such force and glow, left an indelible mark on the minds of those who heard it. And there can be no surer indication of this than the fact that what you have heard mingles itself inseparably with what you have thought yourself. Principal Edwards went so far as to say that the test of the truth of a doctrine is not whether it can be argued

about, but whether it can be preached—another symptom of his humanism.

He himself was a brilliant example of the method for which he pleaded. He might, *mutatis mutandis*, have taken the Apostle's words on his own lips. "I am debtor to the English and to the Welsh, to the wise and to the unwise." The common people heard him gladly, and yet students found that the more they grew in knowledge, the better they appreciated him. Men from the desk and from the counting-house, from the quarry and from the plough, peasant and seaside visitors, milkmaids and boarding-school girls alike, flocked to hear him. But as they owed him much, he owed them something, for his commentaries on 1 Corinthians and Hebrews were worn into shape, very largely, in the course of pulpit exposition. The more technical parts of the larger commentary were, as we are told in the preface, delivered to students—the notes on the grammar to a class at Aberystwyth. He had also lectured on 1 Corinthians at Bala College years before he became Principal there. But he owed a debt to his multifarious hearers, because through them the Spirit had taught him to understand better the Gospel he had to preach.

Many people have an idea that the highest greatness cannot be reached by a man who is primarily a speaker, still less if he have the misfortune to be a popular speaker. Nothing, of course, could be more absurd. Can it be a part of the modern craze for making many books? Or can it be the result of intoxication with the spirit of the age, which has made so many of its conquests for better and for worse by means of the Press? Whatever it is, here is one more clear instance to confute it. The commentary on 1 Corinthians is admittedly a first-rate work. In a recent classified list of commentaries it easily took the first place among books on that epistle. His works on Hebrews are not

throughout so uniform in quality, but parts of the Welsh handbook on the epistle, and of the English volume on it in the Expositor's Bible, touch the very highest levels. We come here and there upon instances even of style which would do credit to a professional literary artist. Here is one on Hebrews ix. 14.

"He offered Himself through an eternal spirit, or as we should say in modern phrase, through His eternal personality. He is the High Priest after the order or Melchizedek, and He invests the sacrifice with all the personal greatness of the High Priest. Is He without beginning of days or end of life? So, also, His sacrifice abides for ever. His power of an indissoluble life belongs to His atonement. Is He untouched by the rolling stream of time? His death was of infinite merit with reference to the past and to the future, though it took place historically at the end of the ages. . . . The eternal High Priest, in one transitory act of death, offered a sacrifice that remains eternally, and obtained for us an eternal redemption."

Several excellent commentators, such as those of Westcott and Delitzsch, give the same interpretation of the phrase, "an eternal spirit," but none of them seems to make the phrase yield so much; and yet, there is here no straining of the text. I heard part of the lecture, from which this quotation is taken, preached to a crowded congregation in a colliery district. On the morning of the same day, in the same little chapel, I had heard him preach to a much smaller congregation. The discourse in the morning was on 1 John ii. 12-13. "I write unto you, little children . . . . " This discourse belonged to quite a different kind from the evening sermon, but was an excellent sample of his preaching. I never heard him better. Though, as we have observed, he was typically a preacher to young men, and there was a message for them in that sermon too, the piece

on forgiveness, the special blessing of childhood, was simply superb. He showed how the Gospel of forgiveness is the very thing which a child is best fitted to understand. His descriptions of children always made you feel that he might be describing his own. It was characteristic of Principal Edwards to give of his best and to be at his very best in delivery when the congregation was small. His popularity had not demoralised him. He became great, not by having great opportunities thrust upon him — though he had his opportunities too—but by using all his opportunities, great and small alike, in the spirit of the Master whose he was and whom he served. Just as his services to education and to educational reform owed their success to his influence as a preacher, so also his rich contributions to exegesis and to dogmatic theology were simply the ripe fruit of his efforts to feed the flock of God.

The Rev. OWEN THOMAS., D.D., Liverpool

By the Rev. JOHN WILLIAMS, Princes Road, Liverpool

Dr Owen Thomas was born at Holyhead, Anglesey, the 16th of December 1812. His father's family originally came from Llanddeiniolen, Carnarvonshire. I well remember the occasion, when preaching with Dr John Thomas, Liverpool, in that neighbourhood, that the subject of our sketch pointed to the house where his ancestors had lived. His mother's family came from Anglesey, but it seems that her mother was born in Scotland, and tradition has it that she descended from some of the princes of that country. However, his grandmother, Helen Jacob, could speak Welsh but very imperfectly. His grandmother's family once upon a time lived at Plas Cadnant, near Porthaethwy, and the estate of Cadnant belonged to them. Dr Thomas's parents were faithful and zealous members with the Calvinistic Methodists at Holyhead. They removed to Bangor when Owen was but a mere lad. The father was appointed deacon of the Tabernacle Church at that place, which shows that he was a man of some prominence in the religious world. The mother Mary Roberts, was noted for her piety, her knowledge, and sound common-sense. The son Owen received his elementary education in the school held by Owen Roberts, brother to Robert Roberts, the noted geologist and almanac-maker of Holyhead. When Owen was about thirteen years of age he was apprenticed as

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stonecutter. Shortly afterwards his parents removed to Bangor, and Owen went to work at the Penrhyn Castle, which was then being built. He worked there for some years, and he joined the night school kept by Mr Ebenezer Jones, son of Dr Arthur Jones, and which was held in the schoolroom of the old Ebenezer Chapel, Bangor.

Owen, even at this early period, evinced an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and it is stated that on his way to and from work he always had a book in his hand, and as a rule the book was wide open in front of him on the stone which he trimmed. I heard him state that, while at work on Penrhyn Castle, he mastered all the volumes of Mosheim's "Ecclesiastical History," and that he could recite most of it by heart. He also said that he could not forget anything he read at that time, and that whole pages of books that he had perused were clear and open before the eye of his mind. While he faithfully attended to his duties at Penrhyn, his spare time was devoted to reading, listening to sermons, and attending various religious gatherings in the community. Preaching and preachers proved a source of great attraction to him. He took particular notice of the preacher, his countenance, his body, his voice, his gestures, the manner in which he read his text and treated his subject. He could even remember the substance of every sermon he heard. In *Y Drysorfa* for 1831 are to be found his notes on the sermon of the Rev. Thomas Jones, Carmarthen, notes which he sent to the editor, the Rev. John Parry of Chester. The whole sermon is practically there, every point of importance, every division and subdivision in its place. When we bear in mind that he was only between sixteen and seventeen years of age at the time, it is surprising that he had attained such a mastery in the understanding of a sermon so early in life.

At the age of twenty-one he began to preach at Bangor, and for a time kept a school in connection with the Tabernacle Church. In 1838 he went to Bala College, where he remained for a period of three years under the tuition of Dr Lewis Edwards and Dr Charles. His fame as a preacher and lecturer on temperance had spread far and wide over the Principality even before he entered college. As evidence of this we may mention the fact that he preached at the association meeting held at Haverfordwest in 1837, and gave an address on temperance at the association meeting held at Bala in the same year. At Bala he was asked to address the gathering between the preaching of Evan Harris and John Elias.

In the year 1841 he, in company with Dr John Parry, editor of the "Encyclopædia Cambrensis" (ten volumes), left Bala and went to the University of Edinburgh, where they stayed for two years. Both of them would undoubtedly have graduated with distinction if they had remained long enough. But lack of means compelled them to leave before completing their studies.

In the year 1843 he was called to the pastorate of Beaumont, Pwllheli, where he remained high in the esteem and affection of the people for a period of three years. In 1846 he was called to Newtown, Montgomeryshire, to take the oversight of the English Church chiefly. He laboured very successfully for a term of four years.

In 1851 he was invited to Jewin Crescent, London. He was there for a period of 14 years. So great was his power and popularity that the Welsh people of London congregated at Jewin Sunday after Sunday in great numbers. He was considered to rank among the foremost preachers of the Metropolis. He was constantly being invited to address the most conspicuous gatherings in the North and South of Wales, and the name of Owen Thomas, London, was a household name throughout the

Principality. In January 1860 he married Elen, youngest daughter of the Rev. William Roberts, Mold. They had five children—two sons and three daughters, of whom three are still living.

In the year 1865, he received a very cordial invitation to become the pastor of Netherfield Road, Liverpool. Shortly after his settlement there he had the misfortune to lose his wife, and it proved a great trial to him.

In 1871 he became the pastor of Princes Road in the same city, where he remained for the rest of his life.

In 1871 the University of Princeton honoured itself by conferring upon him the degree of D.D. During the last years of his life his strength had greatly failed, and the circle of his activity became narrower and narrower. At last he was confined to his house, then to his bed. On Sunday, 2nd August 1891, the end came. He died in peace. His church, the city, and the country in general, had felt that a prince in Israel had fallen. His mortal remains were laid to rest in Hanfield Cemetery on the following Friday. It is seldom that such a multitude of people gather together at the open grave of any man. The same night a memorial sermon was preached at Princes Road Chapel by the late Dr Thomas Charles Edwards. His text was Hebrews xiii. 8. This, in brief, is the outline of the life of one of the greatest and most powerful preachers that Wales has ever seen.

Before describing Dr Thomas as a preacher, I should like to make a brief reference to his literary productions. As I have already stated, he began to write for the press at a very early age, and he continued to write unto the end of his life. He translated books, prepared addresses, and composed works that have enriched and adorned Welsh literature. He was co-editor of *Y Traethodydd*, the chief Welsh quarterly, for several years, and he wrote

many able and critical essays to the same. The first important work which he published was a translation of the exposition of Dr Kitto on the New Testament, with exhaustive notes of his own. The first edition was issued from the Press in 1860, and it continued to appear in parts for several years. These parts contained an exposition on the New Testament by Dr Thomas himself, and it can be said that it equals anything that had ever appeared in the Welsh language. Welsh readers are familiar with his exposition on the Hebrews, based on Kitto's commentary, and which appeared separately. This volume plainly shows that he possessed the critical and expository faculty in a very high degree, together with very extensive acquaintance with his subject-matter. There is not, in my judgment, in the Welsh language an exposition equal to this. As some one observed, the title of this work should not be, "Dr Kitto's Commentary, with notes by Dr Thomas," but, the "Commentary of Dr Thomas, with notes by Dr Kitto." His masterpiece, however, from a literary view-point, was his biography of the Rev. John Jones, of Talysarn, which was published in two volumes in 1874. It is generally admitted that this is the best biography that ever appeared in the Welsh language. Dr Henry Jones, in his evidence before the Commission enquiring into the state of education in Wales, stated in the presence of a responsible body of men that he regarded this biography worthy of comparison with any standard work of its kind in the kingdom. It contains 1,052 pages, and his treatment of the history and development of the Calvinistic Methodist body in all its aspects from 1796 to 1857 is worthy of himself and of the subject. He also wrote the biography of the Rev. Henry Rees, D.D. This also appeared in two volumes, and is a monument to his ability and industry. He had in preparation, some time before his death, a memoir

of John Elias. I am not in a position to state how much of it was written, but he had all the necessary material. However, death intervened, and we lost the only man capable of writing a worthy biography of that wonderful man and preacher.

Dr Thomas as a Preacher

Dr Thomas was without doubt one of the most powerful preachers that the Calvinistic Methodist denomination ever produced, and this means much, especially when we take into consideration the many great men this sect has produced. No preacher drew such large audiences as Dr Thomas during the last twenty-five years of his life. To announce him to preach in any district at any time was a guarantee of a crowded house. I heard the late Rev. D. Charles Davies say that no one but Owen Thomas could fill the Tabernacle Chapel at Bangor on a week-night, and it was true in relation to any other chapel or district in the Principality. In his day he was beyond doubt the preacher of the people. When the various associations were being held, the question that was asked by the people was, "In what chapel does Owen Thomas preach?"

No two great preachers in the Methodist denomination during the latter half of the last century belonged to the same class, in style and mental characteristics. If we named some of them, we would at once see that there is a difference between star and star in glory—a difference not only in the *degree* of the glory, but in its *kind*. What a galaxy of great preachers have we! John Jones, Talysarn; Henry Rees, William Roberts, Edward Morgan, Dr Lewis Edwards and Dr T. Charles Edwards, Joseph Thomas, D. Charles Davies, Edward Matthews, Dr Hughes, Dr Saunders, etc. Yet no two men were alike, while each one, in his own way, was master of the assembly. Dr Thomas did not belong to the same class

as any one of these great men. If we had named John Elias we could not say as much, for Dr Thomas belonged to the same type of preacher as John Elias. I have heard several who had heard John Elias state that Dr Owen Thomas was very much like him, not that he ever thought of *imitating* him, but that there was a natural likeness between the two men, in the same way as one face or one body resembles another. Moreover, Dr Thomas had great admiration for John Elias. He was *the* preacher of Wales in Dr Thomas's youthful days, and certainly no one so resembled John Elias in form and style of utterance. Men like Ebenezer Morris possessed better voices, and others possessed as clear an understanding and as thorough a comprehension as Owen Thomas. But in the art of preaching he had no equal. I know that some good critics will differ from me in this, but it is my candid judgment, after hearing and reading a great deal concerning Welsh preachers.

In addition to this, I have the testimony of a man capable of judging, a man entirely devoid of bias—I mean the late Mr Henry Richard, M.P. He himself had been a preacher, and in his day there was no Member of Parliament comparable to him as a speaker. Some critics compared Owen Thomas to John Bright, and there was a great similarity between them. The following is the statement made to me by Mr Henry Richard, when I had the privilege of spending a Sunday with him at Treborth a few years before his death :—

"I availed myself of every opportunity to hear John Elias when he used to visit London. He used to stay for two months at a time, and he would preach once or twice during the week as well as on the Sabbath. I have had the privilege of listening to the chief speakers both in Welsh and in English on the platform, in the pulpit, and in the House of Commons, and I have no hesitation in stating that I never heard any speaker like John Elias."

Now, it was perfectly natural for a young man so full of zeal to make a hero of such a preacher. John Elias was undoubtedly Dr Thomas's ideal. *But there was a natural similarity between the two.* He could not make a hero of John Jones, Talysarn, and yet be like him without being conscious of the fact, for his voice did not possess the same charm and plaintive tone as that of John Jones, neither had he the same lively imagination. Again, Dr Owen Thomas did not possess the same ornate, classical language, nor had he the same spiritual power as Henry Rees. He could not hurl such lumps of gold and fire as William Roberts, neither could he be as beautiful or as charming as Edward Morgan. He did not possess such a *strong mind* as Dr Lewis Edwards's, or such a *penetrating intellect* as Dr Thomas Charles Edwards's. There was not such keenness of mind as in David Charles Davies. His eloquence was not like the deep, graceful river flowing through the valley, like that of Dr Saunders. He was dramatic, but not like Edward Matthews. He philosophised, but not like Dr Hughes. He could use illustrations, but not like Joseph Thomas. Yet, as a preacher he possessed such a combination of qualities that none of these men possessed. It would not be correct to say that he was greater than *all* of them, for it is possible to possess such a sum of one particular quality that a number of lesser qualities cannot equal it.

Dr Thomas possessed a strong, elastic body, lips formed to speak, a sonorous voice, a passionate nature —tender and vehement, a quick understanding, a memory almost incomparable, uncommon grip of the truth, and perfect self-possession. Here is a combination of natural qualities that were not to be found in *any* of the men just mentioned. But even this combination could not make him such a preacher as he was without something in addition.

1. *He (Dr Owen Thomas) was fully possessed with the spirit of the ministry.*

He was a first-class speaker; he formed his sentences as naturally as he breathed. He could call from the store of his memory things new and old according to his pleasure, together with hymns, verses, quotations, historical references, and sayings of the old preachers, and he could speak to ten thousand people for an hour and a half with the greatest ease. Indeed, a multitude on an open field suited him best. But it is not the gift of speech we wish to emphasise here, but a strong and fiery spirit saturated with the truths of the Gospel—zeal for the truth and intense love for souls. This spirit enabled him to work hard in order to attain thorough knowledge of the field of his labour. He read the best authors, and obtained sufficient mastery of Greek and Latin as to make use of those languages in connection with ancient and modern expositions. The first twenty or thirty minutes of his discourse was invariably occupied with a critical analysis of his text; each part was explained in accordance with the laws of modern exposition, and with considerable erudition. I am doubtful whether a Welsh audience ever heard from any pulpit a better critical analysis than that of Dr Thomas, and our English friends would certainly be surprised if they knew that there was to be found a congregation of Welsh artisans capable of understanding and appreciating such a wonderful intellectual feast. He had carefully studied Church history. He had a wonderful grasp of the place and history of the Bible in every age and country. He was familiar with English literature, and the characteristics of both English and Welsh poetry. He could put his knowledge to the best possible use. He possessed one of the most, if not *the* most, precious and extensive library of any minister in Wales. This library was bought by William Thomas, Esq., Liverpool, for the sum of £1,500, and presented to the Calvinistic Methodist College at Bala. This wonderful collection of books by Dr Thomas was secured solely for the purpose of pre-

paring and fitting him for the great work of his life. It may be said that he taxed the whole world, and presented everything he knew as an offering to Christ and His Cross.

In preaching he was filled with this spirit; the seriousness of a man of God was on his countenance, also in his voice and every gesture of his body. Such, indeed, was his seriousness, and the fearful solemnity with which he dealt with his subject, that men feared and trembled. I well remember the time when he preached in a chapel at Felinheli, and on the field at Llangefni, upon the Spirit of God having left Saul. The people were awe-stricken: some cried, others could not; some looked as if hell itself had been opened before them; not a few appeared as if about to collapse under the weight of their sin. I shall never forget the anecdote he related on this occasion. It was about a lady of high degree who had lost her reason, and was confined in an asylum. The other patients knew by her manner that by birth and education she was superior to them. Speaking to each other they said, "She has moved in a higher circle than we." Then, with outstretched hands, his eyes full of fire, and with a tearful, mournful voice, he exclaimed: "A man from Anglesey going to hell! The pagans from heathen lands will know you, and recognise the country from which you came, and they will say one to another, '*Give room for this man to go further down, for he has moved in a higher circle than we! The effects of rejecting the Gospel of Christ are upon this man: breezes from Calvary have blown upon him.*'" It is impossible to find words to describe the effects of that discourse upon the people.

2. *He possessed some wonderful capacity to draw from common truths deep underlying principles.*

It was easy to see them when he had pointed them out. The uninitiated sees nothing in the stone in a quarry but a slab of slate, but the experienced quarryman detects the thin veins, and with his hammer and chisel he

detaches the one from the other with the greatest ease Dr Thomas takes for his subject the danger of trifling with the temptations of sin. He takes for his text, "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt?" (Prov. vi. 27). Like a skilled workman he goes to his task. After explaining the context and its meaning for about twenty minutes, he says, "This is the way that I understand these words, and so understanding them, I shall endeavour to make the following observations;" and as a rule he would take out his watch while making these observations.

"'My son,' he would say, 'think of this, the danger of trifling with the allurements of sin.' I am not speaking to you about the temptation to *steal*, but the danger of trifling with this temptation. The danger will appear to you if you note the following things:—

"1. That every temptation or enticement aims at a nature that is already corrupted, and which is therefore perfectly open to respond to it.

"2. That man by trifling with temptation places himself directly in the path that leads to the sin.

"3. That to trifle with the temptation is in itself a proof of the existence of a disposition for the sin which is its crucial object.

"4. That to trifle with temptation brings man into contact with the sin solely in its alluring aspect, and therefore gives the sin an opportunity of leaving an impression favourable to itself upon the mind.

"5. That man, by trifling with temptation, weakens his moral resistance against sin, and by degrees becomes so weak as to be unable to resist at all.

"6. That man, by trifling with sin, ultimately tempts the Spirit of God to withdraw his protection from him, and to leave him a prey to his own lust."

Who would think that there were so many elements in the danger? who could set them forth in such order and with such ability? and, especially, who could dilate

upon them with such power and effect? I heard this sermon several times, and I regard it as a model of its kind. It would be impossible to think of anything superior in point of composition, and it would likewise be impossible to conceive a better gift or better spirit for its deliverance than Dr Thomas possessed. He also possessed the instinct to know what was in a verse, and that before he could see clearly through it. He was like a dog with a keen scent of its quarry on the hill before seeing it. I well remember Dr James, of Manchester, saying that he was once on a visit to Dr Thomas. He found him in his study preparing for the Sunday. He talked freely to Dr James about his sermon, and among other things he said, "I have got three heads, but there is another which I have not yet been able to see. It is there, I know."

Dr Thomas had some wonderful sermons—no man during the last half-century had better; sermons that convinced and moved the multitude. In this connection we may mention the wonderful time he had in the town of Carnarvon. That was early in his ministerial career. It was the sermon that gave him his name and his fame. Its influence was felt in the town and neighbourhood for many years. And even now people talk about it, although fifty years have passed away since then. His text was: "For ye have not walked this way before." It was also in Carnarvon that he gave the last great sermon of his life. I was on the platform listening to him. I never witnessed such a sight. His text was, "He that spared not His own Son," etc. It was a strong sermon from the point of view of composition. It was delivered in the Pavilion to a congregation of 10,000 people. When he reached the climax, the scene baffled description. The late Mr Henry Richard, M.P., was on the platform. He looked as if he had been shot. He bowed his head and cried like a child. The wave passed over the whole

congregation ; thousands wept, and although I was near the preacher, I could not hear a word he said, so great was the commotion. I could see Dr Thomas waving his hand and making a few gestures, but he was obliged to abandon his task, for the audience was beyond his control.

The Rev. JOHN HUGH EVANS (Cynfaen). [*To face p.* 391

The Rev. JOHN HUGH EVANS (CYNFAEN.)

By the Rev. WILLIAM HUGH EVANS, Rhyl.

When Queen Victoria began to reign, John Hugh Evans, better known by his bardic name of Cynfaen, was barely four years of age, and lived with his parents and his elder brother in a small substantial house built by his father's own hands on the open uplands of the parish of Ysceifiog, in Flintshire. His parents, John and Ellen Evans, were an honest, industrious, and godly couple, who lived a simple life in humble circumstances—though John Evans was one of the "independent electors" of the county—and were held in respect by their neighbours for their intelligence, piety, and their force of character. John Evans was a monoglot Welshman, endowed with the distinctive gift of genius. He was a man of independent judgment and of strong convictions. The quaint, original manner in which he expressed his opinions, together with his sense of humour, made him interesting in conversation and popular as a public speaker. He read *the* best Welsh books within his reach, and was always meditating. He was received into the order of bards (under the name of "Ioan Tachwedd") at the Denbigh Eisteddfod of 1828, and by his ode on the Ascension of Christ he won the chair of the Eisteddfod held in Flint Castle in 1851. For many years he served the Wesleyan Methodist Church as an acceptable local preacher. In the light of these facts regarding the father, one can better understand the son. John Evans and his

good wife were deeply conscious of their obligation to train their two boys (their four daughters having died in infancy) in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Their means did not enable them to give their sons a better secular education than that afforded by an ordinary elementary school, and the only available school of that kind was a wretchedly poor one. Fortunately, however, a movement was set on foot to establish a new British school at Lixwm, John Evans being one of the chief promoters; and on the opening day his son John Hugh, when twelve years of age, was sent to the new school, and remained there for about six years. Under the capable management of a trained and conscientious master, this school became famous for its success. John Hugh was now eager to learn; and, making good use of his advantages, he quickly rose to the top. The materials of knowledge thus gathered in his youth were developed by diligent self-culture in after years.

In his twentieth year he experienced the great change by which, on Christ's own conditions, he entered into the Kingdom of God; and his life, hitherto irreproachable, was now adorned with the beauty of holiness. Some months afterwards he became a schoolmaster at Ruthin, and in spite of the prejudice and the petty persecution to which he was subjected by some of those in authority on account of his Nonconformity, he retained his position for seven years, and each succeeding year brought a better report from the inspector and a higher grant from the Government. By his sterling qualities of character and his good influence over the children, he in time won the confidence and esteem of those who had formerly opposed him. During these years he faithfully kept his position as a member and official in the Christian Church, and, acquiring greater strength of character as time went on, he steadily increased in service and in influence.

But he had not yet undertaken the great work of his life. He was twenty-five years of age when he began to preach. This was in October 1857, and not till then did he disclose the secret which he had so jealously guarded—that for years he had been in "great distress of mind" because of his disobedience to the heavenly call. At last, having gone through the discipline of a personal affliction, "he felt he could not dare to appear before God in judgment without having preached His Gospel." Shortly after, in a letter to his brother, he said that the "great distress of mind" had vanished, that he felt happier than he had ever been before, and, having given a characteristic description of his first attempt at preaching, he concluded: "I must now apply all my powers to work—never, never to turn back." Many evidences appeared at the time, all unconsciously to himself, that the task to which he had set his hand was undertaken with intense earnestness and solemnity. The notes and prayers found among his papers after his death testified to the struggles, the resolves, and the submission passed through during that period—ever regarded by him as a "crisis" in his life.

More than two years elapsed before he entertained the thought of becoming a minister. He was content with being a local preacher, and he thought that, with the blessing of Providence, he might be able to render some service to the neighbouring churches by preaching the Gospel of Christ "without charge." But by the beginning of 1860 several experienced ministers and thoughtful laymen had succeeded in convincing him that it was his duty to entrust himself to his brethren as a candidate for the ministry. He looked upon this as "another crisis," and, in his own words, "it led me to open my heart before God as the sailor spreads his sail before the wind," and before long he felt assured of the Lord's will in the matter. In a letter which he wrote at the time he says: "I would wish to be always found in the right relation with two

dispensations in this world: in the covenant of the dispensation of grace, and in the path of the dispensation of providence. Then I will not fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Such was his ruling desire, and it may truly be said that he retained a right relation with these two dispensations until the close of his life.

After this Mr Evans passed honourably through every porch which guards the entrance to the Wesleyan ministry, and in the year 1860 he was appointed to his first circuit. For the remaining twenty-six years of his life he faithfully did "the work of an evangelist," and fulfilled his ministry in some of the most important circuits of Welsh Methodism.

But in the midst of his power and influence he was struck down by a painful disease, which he bore with heroic patience and resignation. As he was entering the dark valley—his face shining as if rays of celestial light were falling on his sanctified soul—he said in Welsh, with a clear, strong voice, "It brightens up splendidly," and in a short time his spirit had passed away. He died at Llanrwst on the 24th of June 1886, within three weeks of his fifty-third year; and his remains, followed by a large concourse of friends and admirers, were laid to rest in St Mary's Churchyard of that town. A monument, raised by public subscription, stands on his grave.

Cynfaen was undoubtedly a genius. His individuality was notably rich in the variety, originality, depth, and independence of his powers. By common consent he owned a brilliant imagination, remarkable for its bold creations and soaring flights. Moreover, all his powers were well controlled by a sound judgment and pure taste, and were wisely employed for the furtherance of practical aims.

Early in his life his father found out that "John

had something in him." What first attracted his attention was the child's lively imagination. When four years of age he was afflicted with small-pox, and brought very near to death's door. The anxiety of his parents was great, the more so because a few days before his illness they had lost a daughter by the same dread disease. The father watched by the bedside of the boy for several days and nights, and when the worst had passed his joy knew no bounds. During his convalescence the father spent much of his time with him, and was as much pleased with the child's droll sayings as was the child with his father's company. Then it was that the father discovered John's powers of imagination, and began to have hopes of his future. For some years afterwards the boy's possession of a strong imagination was far more obvious than his readiness to learn. When but a small boy he would often relate romantic tales of his own invention with such ease and naturalness, and with apparently nothing in his environments to suggest them, as to astonish his parents. His mother was anxious that "the lad should not learn to say untruths," while his father welcomed the tales as signs of genius, as no doubt they were. But he was not quick at reading and writing, though his parents did their best to teach him. He was far more skilful, and far happier too, in drawing a cow than in reading aloud or in writing the letters of the alphabet. And when he was sent to school, which was in his eighth year, it was more natural for him to explain the word "gorgeousness" by an imaginative meaning—*George y go' gonest, i.e.* George the honest blacksmith — than to attempt the spelling or the pronunciation of the word. As has already been said, the school where he spent his early years was miserably inefficient, and it was but little he learnt there. But on entering the new British School he found himself

in a new world; his mind soon expanded, and henceforth there was no need to urge him on with his lessons. The range of subjects taught in this school was wider and more varied than the one usually covered in an elementary school in those years. With the new opportunities, and with a stimulating teacher, his mind awoke to the charm of knowledge, and he became alive to the importance of making the best of his advantages. He found zest in acquiring information, and before long nothing stood before him. By the time he was eighteen his mind was equipped and cultivated beyond his years.

As already noted, it did not fall to his lot to receive a college education, but he had a very fair acquaintance with many of the subjects taught in colleges. He may have lacked the exactness and polish of the trained scholar, but the substance and range of his knowledge were such that he had no need to feel ashamed. He had a keen and intelligent appreciation of the fine arts, and especially of painting. He had an artist's eye, and could easily read the ideas conveyed on the canvas by the painter's brush. He loved to gaze on the visions of beauty which unveiled themselves before his appreciative eye until they became a possession and "a joy for ever." He spent many hours, in utter forgetfulness of everything else, looking at Doré's "Christ leaving the Prætorium" when that celebrated picture was first exhibited in London, and as a result of his study he wrote a descriptive article, which was regarded as a masterpiece by those best able to judge, and which was greatly enjoyed by ordinary readers on account of its illuminating and powerful delineation of the various characters pourtrayed in the scene. In this article he evinces his knowledge of the laws and technique of painting. The natural consistency of his criticism on the work, in its whole and in its parts,

showed that he well knew what he was writing about, and that his admiration was not merely an echo of public opinion. He recognised the spirit of the picture, read the expression on the faces of the different characters, and saw the soul, as it were, behind the face. One who had looked carefully on the face of Caiaphas, for instance, "a face of official wrath in unrelieved doubt"; or the face of Annas, "the dogmatic divine, who is sure that Jesus of Nazareth is against the dogmas, and quite as sure that He ought to be crucified for that reason," will have no difficulty in admitting that the author has correctly read the expressions. Other striking examples of his insight might be adduced. His observations on the Christ are too long to quote here, and it would not do to give fragmentary quotations of these, as has been done in the case of Caiaphas and of his father-in-law. The article is not only marked by the author's skill and judgment, lit up here and there with flashes of humour: it is also pervaded throughout by a pure and exalted feeling. The statement about the mother of Jesus is a most pathetic touch. The varied emotions and passions which Dorè depicted on canvas were accurately seen by Cynfaen, and vividly interpreted into words. One might further refer to the influence which "Christ before Pilate" had upon him, and to the pleasure he derived from his many hours of study of the old masters during his residence in London, Liverpool, and Manchester; but enough has been said to show that a good picture was to him a rare intellectual enjoyment. Besides the artist's eye, he also had the artist's hand, as his own pictures prove. He could give artistic expression to an imaginative idea — as, for instance, the idea in Geshin's verse, composed in prospect of his death, or to a bit of nature, or to a human face. The genius of the artist was there; the technical training only was lacking.

While Cynfaen's imagination kept true to its nature, he did not allow it to trespass on the functions of his other powers, nor to interfere with their rights; on the contrary, they each gave additional value to his imagination, and together they helped to form the noble and well-balanced mind of a man who could be safely trusted for his sound judgment on matters of pure reason, and at the same time be admired for his flights into the more emotional realms of poetry, oratory, and painting.

The Rev. John Evans ("Eglwys Bach"), in his memorial sermon on Cynfaen, published in his *City Road Welsh Pulpit* (xxxvii. 1887), compares him in some of his "natural and personal characteristics" with the behemoth of the book of Job: in magnitude, strength, sublimity, and in passive bravery. With regard to his "magnitude," or largeness of mind, he says:—

"In bodily stature Cynfaen was no bigger than the average. He stood about five feet eight, and was neither broad nor stout. But his mental stature was remarkable for its height and depth, its length and breadth. He took a sympathetic interest in many different branches of knowledge. In addition to his love of theology, philosophy, and poetry, he paid attention to astronomy and geology, painting and sculpture, politics and criticism. His lecture on volcanoes testified to his knowledge of geology. His portrait of the venerable Samuel Davies (the first) and of others proves that he could excel in painting, while his appreciation in *Yr Eurgrawn* of Doré's great picture shows how well acquainted he was with the principles of the art. It was a treat to spend a day with him in the National Gallery [Mr Evans often accompanied him there]. He knew so much of the history of the great masters, and his observations on their different characteristics were most interesting. . . . His love of painting amounted to a passion. He had a fairly wide acquaintance with other arts and sciences, for his mental tastes ran strongly in that direction.

Perhaps music was the only exception. . . . It is well known that he was a poet and a critic. His article on 'Taste and Criticism,' which appeared in *Y Geninen*, and the weekly column he edited in *Y Genedl*, gave evidence of his lofty sentiments with regard to the principles of criticism, to which he thought the literary men of his country would do well to pay more attention. Added to all this, his versatile mind grappled with the questions of the day with the deepest interest; he observed the course of the great world outside, and no event of importance passed by unheeded. He kept a keen watch on the political movements of his own country, and whenever he thought it necessary he would speak out his mind on the situation without fear or favour. It will thus be seen that the range of his mind was wide, and perhaps it ought to be added that it was noted less for its precision than for its spaciousness.

"He was notable for the depth of his thought. With the keenness of a philosopher, he penetrated to the principles of things. This may be seen in his writings, and his public ministry was distinguished by the same feature. But the altitude of his mind was more evident even than its penetration. In all his work he struck a high key-note. In some country places people complained that his sermons were above the reach of his audiences, for his language was unusual, his illustrations were classic, and his topics strange. Perhaps this originality is one of his characteristics as a poet. . . . He was a very behemoth of a bard. Could any one 'put an hook into his nose'? He was too huge a creature to cast into the scales; and rather than endanger the critical apparatus, it was easier, perhaps, to turn him aside with but a word of condemnation."

I have not hesitated to give the foregoing quotation, long as it is, because Mr Evans knew Cynfaen so well, and possessed a judgment as able as it was independent. I have, therefore, thought it more appropriate to make use of his observations on Cynfaen's mental "magnitude"

than to offer any of my own, and the more so, because these observations were originally given in the Welsh language.

In the same sermon Mr Evans remarks on Cynfaen's "strength," that "there was no element of feebleness in his appearance, nor one weak feature in his character"; that "the tone of his voice, his diction, his style, and his thoughts were noted for virility and power"; that "his mind was filled with energy, which took more the form of strength than of perseverance"; that "the 'strong pieces of brass' and the 'bars of iron' of behemoth's bones imaged Cynfaen's power in debate, on the platform as well as in the pulpit; in speech as well as in the press"; and further, that "he delivered and defended his opinions with authority, and would take part in debate with remarkable fearlessness and power."

Perhaps I ought to state here that his views were not always popular. Their strangeness, heightened as it was by the novel way in which they were often expressed, aroused a certain amount of adverse criticism, especially in the early years of his ministry; but many were inclined to attribute this originality to the liveliness of his imagination. Mr John Evans says that he "held some peculiar views with regard to ordinary matters." No doubt he made mistakes at times, but not as often as one might suppose, from the way in which his opinions were first received. Perhaps his imagination did sometimes carry him beyond his brethren, but his "strength" arose from his conviction of the strength of his own cause, and from his clear understanding of his own position, as well as from the falsity and weakness of the position which he opposed. I must pass by Mr Evans's observations on Cynfaen's "sublimity" and "passive bravery," with the remark that by the former he means "sublimity of oratory," and the latter is

explained in that "though he was strong, and conscious of his strength, he never delighted in attacking or in striking the first blow." "He possessed undoubted courage, arising from his independence of spirit, his consciousness of power, and his fidelity to the convictions of his conscience; but his courage displayed itself more in defence than in attack." On more than one occasion he was obliged to defend himself against attacks made upon him as adjudicator and author, and it may be said that he never left the field a loser. As Mr Evans remarks, he possessed a "terrible power of sarcasm," as well as "a large amount of humour," and it was but natural that he should employ both these weapons in defending himself against bitter and uncalled-for attacks. But he employed them without in the least sacrificing his innate sense of honour, always relying, of course, on his ability to prove the worthiness of the cause which he advocated.

The reader will not complain if I give further quotations regarding Cynfaen's capacities and characteristics, instead of enlarging upon them myself. The late Dr John Hughes ("Glanystwyth") made him the subject of an appreciative *critique* about nine years after his death. In the intervening years the country had had time to form an estimate of Cynfaen's power and influence, and the national press had expressed its opinion on his merits when it reviewed his memorial volume, which was published by his widow in 1888. Dr John Hughes, by common consent, was a man who always judged for himself, and who did not hesitate to express his mind explicitly. In his *critique* he says :—

"Although it never fell to his lot to serve his Church in prominent official circles, I doubt whether the name of any benefactor of Welsh Wesleyan Methodism (excepting, perhaps, the first missionaries) will survive the endeared

name of the Rev. John Hugh Evans. He possessed eminent excellencies, and I can do nothing better than invite the reader to view some of these, for they explain the high position he attained as orator, writer, and poet.

"No one could listen to Cynfaen's sermons or read any of his writings without being struck by the extent and power of his perceptive faculties. He always took a large load in his embrace, not because he sought to do so, but because he knew not it was large, and because he knew not how to take a smaller."

Of Cynfaen's imagination he says "it was more creative than decorative"; "it cut a new path for itself"; and "he possessed a fancy which would colour his own creations, but not those of another." He adds, "Cynfaen was a poet and writer of the first order," and, taking both together, "he was the greatest in Welsh Wesleyan Methodism."

Dr Hugh Jones, the present editor of *Yr Eurgrawn*, in his memorial sermon on Cynfaen, preached in Liverpool on the text, "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. iv. 18), observes that "owing to the greatness of his mental powers, his nature was peculiarly fitted for increase." "His mental vision was very far-reaching, very wide and clear. He was highly proficient in the task of searching for truth and in recognising it. Although he, without doubt, was possessed of unusual imaginative power, the great strength of his reasoning faculties must not be overlooked. He was acquainted with the different relations of truth in their remotest and deepest ramifications." Having referred to the versatility of his mind and to the different spheres of his knowledge and skill, Dr Jones adds: "And as one approached near him, one saw the Christian gentleman, of a most tender and kindly nature."

The late Dr Herber Evans, in his review of Cynfaen's memorial volume, says :—

"Mr Evans was a remarkable man in many respects ; a man of principle in the highest degree, one who steadfastly clung to the truth though he had to suffer for it. He was a very liberal-minded man. Though faithful to the hilt to his own denomination, his eye was sufficiently open to see the good qualities of other denominations, and his heart was large enough to acknowledge them. . . . We laboured together in the same town for a time, and he was no ordinary man to know, but a character quite by himself. . . . There was in Cynfaen a brilliant talent wedded to purity of principle which made him a man of lofty character."

The Rev. Griffith Ellis, M.A., Bootle, wrote of him :—

"He had his own peculiar manner. He could not say ordinary things as they were said by others. Seldom has there been a man who was less of a repeater or an imitator than he. Everything he said was stamped with his own image. But it was not his purpose nor his characteristic merely to express ordinary matters in an extraordinary way ; he was a serious and a diligent student. He was a poet, and there is a good deal of living poetry in some of his sermons, but he also took great interest in philosophy and science. He gave special attention to the influence of these on the evidences of Christianity. He strongly believed in the divinity of the Christian religion, and the great effort of his life and ministry, we imagine, was to show that philosophy and science do not disturb its foundations in the least. On the one hand he taught that philosophy and science had their own proper territories, which are often deserted by philosophers and by men of science when they attack Christianity ; and on the other hand, that Christianity also has her own territory, and that it is of the utmost importance to keep them both apart."

Having hastily glanced over Cynfaen's life-history, and having stayed a while in the company of independent observers to look on his individuality and his chief mental

features, it further remains for me to bring under review the work accomplished by him.

It is evident from the foregoing quotations that Cynfaen was acknowledged to be a poet and a writer. He began to compose poetry when young, but he aimed too high. Although his poem on "The Resurrection" gained "honourable mention" at the Rhuddlan Eisteddfod, there was obviously no chance for him, a youth of seventeen, to win the chair when such an eminent poet as Ieuan Glan Geirionydd was a fellow-competitor. He made several other attempts before he was twenty. Afterwards he competed only on rare occasions — when the subject strongly appealed to him, and when other conditions were favourable. Even when the subject was to his liking, he did not always feel sufficient confidence in the ability of the adjudication. He knew that, if he followed his own ideas on the subject, he would soar too high for them. "His genius lay," said Glanystwyth, "in a direction different from that of the critics of his day, which placed him at a disadvantage as a competitor. His poetic productions are not coloured by much feeling; they are distinguished more for their amplitude and power." Yet he did gain some eisteddfodic prizes. He won the chair of the Ordovices in 1877 for an ode on "The Temptation of Christ," and he won the prize offered for the best poem on Thomas Aubrey. With reference to the latter, Glanystwyth says, "This is one of Cynfaen's masterpieces. I am not acquainted with any poetic composition in the Welsh language which is as powerful as this one. If we are to find fault with it, it is because it is too exuberant, because there is a too great lavish of talent." The late Druisyn, in an article in *Y Geninen* (Jan., 1902) says, "Cynfaen's most prominent characteristics as a poet, as might be expected from the character of his mind, were power, majesty, and sublimity;" he adds, "these were the

prominent features of all his compositions;" he "had a predilection for great subjects;" and "his power of perception—the eye which sees nature—was keen and penetrating, so that the profound, the hidden, the distant, and the intricate were clearly visible to him." Druisyn admits that, "in looking at his wonderful creations, some would say that he went to extremes," and that "his creations went beyond the bounds of nature and reason." But he contends that this was no more the fault of Cynfaen than it was the fault of Browning that Douglas Jerrold, when he was ill, failed to understand "Sordello."

Much might be written of Cynfaen as a man of letters. Though his pen was not as prolific as many, he wrote no inconsiderable amount, and all his productions were valuable and weighty. Glanystwyth remarks that "a selection of his principal writings would form a bulky and extremely interesting volume." He commenced writing to the magazines of his denomination at an early age, and his chief essays attracted immediate attention on account of the novelty of their matter and its treatment. Before proceeding further, it were best to state, once for all, that many complained of his style—that it was rugged, not sufficiently clear, and therefore troublesome to read. On this point Glanystwyth says, "The style of this prose was not equal to that of Dr William Davies in refinement and elegance, but his compositions were more massive and as full of verve and animation." Evidently it was not the charm of his style which accounted for the popularity of his writings; and I freely admit that a few of his chief compositions might have been improved by having greater smoothness and perspicuity. But it would appear that the character of his style was often influenced by the nature of his subject. Few would blame the style of his essay on "The Literature of the Working Man," written about forty years ago, and well worth reading to-day. Cynfaen wrote for thinkers, whether students or working men, and the

"verve and animation" of his articles always commanded the attention of this class of reader.

It is not proposed to give a list of his literary works, but a few remarks on some of them may not be out of place. In 1864 he edited a volume of sermons by the Rev. Samuel Davies (the first). It contains twenty-four sermons by this venerable divine, with a sketch of his life, an "address" in poetry, and an introduction by the editor. It also contains a short ode by the editor's father, Ioan Tachwedd. It may here be said in passing that the last things he read, when on his death-bed, were two sermons from this volume: the one on "The Purposes of Affliction," and the other on "Submission to the Will of God"—his observations upon them being, "They are full of substance. They mark the path correctly."

In 1877 he edited "The Works of the Rev. Rowland Hughes" (a post octavo volume of 420 pp.) The works are preceded by the editor's famous lecture on the life and genius of the author. This lecture had been delivered to large audiences in various parts of the Principality, and it was printed at the request of its numerous admirers. Though it was only intended as an introduction to the sermons and lectures of Rowland Hughes, it was regarded by many readers as the best part of the volume, and it is still considered to be one of the most brilliant prose compositions in the language. It is impossible here to do justice to the lecture, as the lecture does to its subject. With his splendid descriptive powers Cynfaen succeeded in drawing a life-like and full-length portrait of the "prince and great man" in Israel; and by displaying the features and achievements of Rowland Hughes, Cynfaen also unconsciously revealed his own powers.

In connection with the North Wales District Synod, held in Bangor in the summer of 1874, he delivered his lecture on "Christianity and the Religious Demands of

the Mind." It was the second of the series of annual lectures delivered in connection with the Welsh Synods, the idea of holding the lectures having originated with him. His lecture was delivered in Horeb Chapel, to a large and appreciative audience, which completely filled the large edifice. All the ministers, and many of the prominent laymen of the Connexion in North Wales, were present, together with a large number of leading men of all the denominations in the city. Seldom has so large an audience listened to a lecture of the kind for so long a time and with such close attention. Cynfaen was certainly at his best on that occasion, and perhaps he never showed a more conspicuous mastery over himself, his subject, and his audience. The lecture was full of solid matter, subtle thinking, and long drawn-out reasoning; yet he delivered it without a note. More surprising still, it aroused the enthusiasm of his hearers. In a press report of the lecture it was said that "such was the excitement of the audience that it broke out at the close not only into shouts of 'Amen!' and 'Praise God!' but also into vigorous clapping of hands and stamping of feet. With a lecture so intensely religious in tone, and having so large a measure of spiritual influence, the acclamation seemed somewhat strange."

Soon after its delivery the lecture was published in pamphlet form, and later it was included in a volume containing the whole series. The main object of the lecture is to prove that Christianity, as a religion, truly and fully responds to the demands of man's spiritual nature. Having defined the demands, the author proceeds to show how the Christian religion meets with them, by establishing the following propositions: That the God revealed by Christianity fully satisfies the claims of the human mind as to what God should be; that Christianity recognises and builds upon man's moral obligation; that its ethics satisfies the highest claims of man's rational

and moral nature; that it has a satisfactory account of its divine derivation; that in the fitness of its constitution there appeared from the first the essentials for future success, and that since its establishment it has prospered in conformity with its philosophy and work; and that it has a higher and more important knowledge of the facts of man's relations with God than is accessible to the human mind apart from Christianity. The above propositions show what, in the author's opinion, are the religious demands of the human mind, and how completely Christianity responds to them. And after establishing by a full and elaborate discussion the claims of each of these demands, he denies the existence of any other, and asserts that any expectation for evidence of divine authority in another system of religion can only be futile. He thus leads up to his "practical proposition": that since the evidences of Christianity as a system of religion meet with all the demands of the human mind, Christianity has a rightful claim to man's acceptance.

This brief analysis shows that the author planned his lecture and worked it out in his own original way. Glanystwyth says, "The working out was worthy of the originality of the scheme," and, after stating that he could not bind himself to agree with some of the author's ideas, he continues: "It is doubtful whether anything abler or more original on the philosophy and ethics of religion has appeared in the Welsh language. . . . He grasps his subject in a manner worthy of a philosopher, and although he travels an unfrequented region, he leaves a clear path behind; the more one accustoms oneself to his way of thinking, the easier it is to understand him; and the more his lecture is read, the better it becomes."

In *Y Traethodydd* for July 1877 he wrote an able article on "The Evidences of Christianity," based on Prebendary Row's Bampton Lectures on "Christian Evidences Viewed in Relation to Modern Thought." The writer explained

the position of the Bampton lecturer, and his method of showing how Christianity proves itself as a revelation, which was the "old method of Philip with Nathanael: 'Come and see.'" While greatly appreciating the lectures as a whole, the reviewer criticises some of the lecturer's positions. He refuses to accept his statement that "the moral miracle possesses an advantage over the physical one in point of evidential value," because "to those who believe in conformity with the theism of the Bible, that God is energising in all the forces of nature, there is some difficulty in laying down a clear line of distinction between miracles and remarkable acts of His providential government, as they are both alike manifestations of a divine energy"; and because, "on the other hand, those who view the universe as a piece of self-acting mechanism are always able to account for the occurrence of an extraordinary event, by assigning it to the action of some force which has never yet come under human observation." The answer of the reviewer to the first assertion is that the term "miracle" includes not merely a supernatural cause, but also "a departure from nature's fixed method's of producing effects, while providential occurrences, even of the most wonderful character, are within the sphere of nature's operations." His reply to the other assertion is:—

"True; but would it be right to attribute them to a force unknown in the fixed order of nature, when they take place by the will of a person? If the credit were given to an unknown force, that person's rule over it would show that he knew it, and had the right to speak about it, for to him the force is known, even if it is unknown to every one else. And if this particular person who uses it according to his will asserts that it is the 'power of God,' he ought to be believed until the contrary be proved, especially when the character and teaching of this person are according to God. Whatever may be the value, and the higher value, of a moral miracle in the

continuity of its evidence, a miracle of nature has the advantage over every possible evidence as an assurance to eye-witness, and we are not content with taking anything for less than its value in order to see the higher value of something else."

As has been said, the reviewer greatly appreciated the lectures, and he agreed with the lecturer in placing the moral evidences of Christianity in the forefront. His complaint was that the lecturer sometimes "broke the old boundary stones, whereas it would have been sufficient to move them." In a review on that issue of *y Traethodydd*, the Rev. John Evans (Eglwys Bach), said :—

"It is evident that the author of this article ['The Evidences'] is on native ground, and is master of the situation. It is characterised by freshness, independence and by great courage. Such an essay in an English quarterly would command attention and create a stir. . . . A good paper appears in the *London Quarterly* on the same subject, but we have no hesitation in saying that the Welshman's is by far the fuller and abler of the two."

In January 1883 the first number of *Y Geninen* was published—a quarterly magazine which still enriches Welsh literature. Among the good articles of that issue, the cleverest and most important is the one on "Taste and Criticism," by Cynfaen. He had long been convinced that the official eisteddfodic adjudications on the literary competitive compositions were too superficial; that they were often made according to the not always refined taste of the adjudicator, rather than according to the proper canons of criticism. Once, when he had read a superficial remark made in the name of criticism, condemning a poetic composition as one of which "nothing can be made," he said to Druisyn: "A poetic idea must be as prominent in a composition as is a

Druid's nose on his face before the critics of to-day can see it." Some have sat in the adjudicator's chair who would have been struck with consternation if they had seen a competitor soaring higher than a swallow's flight before a shower. Cynfaen had occasion to write the article under notice, and it had a mission at the time —perhaps it is not out of date now. He lays down the canons of criticism clearly and fairly, and from beginning to end shows an easy mastery over the subject, but space forbids further mention. It is enough to say that the article established his reputation as a literary critic, and convinced those who were not previously acquainted with him that they had a new force to reckon with.

His essay on "Eben Fardd as a Descriptive Poet," and the rest of his literary productions, must be left untouched. Neither can I do more than make a passing reference to his eloquence and power as a platform speaker, by which he rendered effective service to the cause of Foreign Missions, the Bible Society, Temperance, and Politics. As a lecturer he stood in the front rank, and his lectures gave pleasure and instruction to multitudes. His most popular lectures were "Man in Earnest," in which he appeared as a practical man and social reformer; "Luther Bendragon," in which the lecturer is seen to be a capable historian, who had thorough knowledge of the period of the Reformation; "Volcanoes," a lecture which he illustrated by large coloured drawings done by himself, and which revealed the range and exactness of his scientific knowledge. The Rev. John Evans, in his memorial sermon already referred to, quotes from a newspaper that as a lecturer he stood alone in massiveness and power; that his climaxes "were glorious"; and that the flow of his oratory was majestic as the swell of the sea, "carrying everything before it."

In politics Cynfaen was an enlightened and staunch Liberal, his jealousy for the rights of man as man

being intense. Abraham Lincoln was one of his heroes, and his antagonism to what the late Lord Salisbury described on a famous occasion years afterwards as "putting money on the wrong horse," was unmistakable from the very first. He was a conscientious Nonconformist, but he recognised the worth of such men as Dr Westcott, as well as of men like Dr Dale of the Free Churches. He did not believe in the union of the Church and State, and he looked with anxiety at the growth of Romish tendencies in the Church of England.

But although John Hugh Evans's activities extended in many directions, and achieved success in various spheres of usefulness, he attained his greatest distinction, and will best be remembered, as a minister of Christ, and a preacher of the gospel of the grace of God. Whatever else he was, whatever else he did, was made subservient to his main life-work as preacher and minister. During the first three years of his ministry, he was the colleague of the late Rev. Samuel Davies, an eminent minister of the Wesleyan Connexion, who for twenty-one years was the chairman of the North Wales District, and for many years the editor of *Yr Eurgrawn*. This is Mr Davies's testimony of him in the period referred to: that "he upheld the dignity of his office and the honour of his sacred calling without blemish"; that "he was perfectly free from pride and assertiveness, and yet sufficiently independent to express and defend his own opinions"; that as a colleague "he was everything that heart could wish"; that "it was not by relying merely on his own resources, without making further effort, that John Hugh rose to eminence as a great man, a great litterateur, and a great preacher"; that "his Lord endowed him with talents," but that he took care to give the "money into the bank"; and that "he brought to his ministry the abundant fruit of studious research,

although it had not then attained the ripeness and richness of the culture of later years." And Mr Davies adds: "My beloved and revered colleague left his first circuit having won the love and high esteem of the congregations to whom he ministered in holy things, and having given fair promise of the culture and brilliancy which subsequently adorned his talents and increasing powers. . . . He ventured out to new fields, and in his own characteristic manner brought out of rich treasury 'things new and old'. . . ." It may be said with truth that Mr Evans left each succeeding circuit as we are told he left his first, except that his power and influence grew with the gathering years.

Taking a general view of his ministerial career, Mr Evans (Eglwys Bach), said: "The burden of his ministry was the truth of Christianity, and of its evidence." He states that "his mind was illimitably productive, his ministry always fresh and rich, and the method in which he delivered the great message of his life was full of variety"; and that his message was "Christianity as 'the word of truth,' the revelation of God's thoughts concerning man as an intelligent, moral, and immortal being, and a sinner." Similarly the Rev. Griffith Ellis, M.A., states in his review on Cynfaen's *Memorial Volume*: "We do not know of any sermons in the Welsh language so full of what may be called the Defence of Christianity as are these sermons. Their author was acquainted with the attacks on Christianity in their most recent forms as well as with the changed method of defence which they called forth." Mr Ellis noticed a sermon of a different character in the volume, that under the title, "The Motto of the Sabbath School" ("Let me not see the death of the child," Gen. xxi. 16). This sermon is also according to the general tenor of Mr Evans's ministry. Some of his sermons were eminently practical. He was not without observing

"the signs of the times," and he was not a man to neglect an opportunity.

The Rev. Abel J. Parry, D.D., writes:—

"Though quite intimate for many years with the late Rev. J. H. Evans (Cynfaen), it was, I regret to say, never my good fortune to hear him preach. I did hear him speak twice on temperance, and both occasions will ever remain indelibly impressed upon my memory as rare treats. A subject as trite as temperance was treated by him with marvellous freshness and force. I have, however, read the sermons in his *Memorial Volume* (edited by his brother). These sermons are, without exaggeration, among the most thoughtful examples of sermonic literature in the language. I have read some of them over and over, and I have never read them without regretting my great loss in not having ever had the privilege of hearing them preached by their author. I knew him as a man of so much soul and energy that it always occurred to me how grandly his great thoughts would have sounded as delivered by him, and lightened up by his passionate Welsh nature."

Of these sermons, Dr Hugh Jones (Bangor) wrote in a review:—

"John Hugh Evans's personality is in every sermon, paragraph, and sentence. His ideas, his illustrations, his spirit, his language — his everything is here before us alive. We see him, hear him, and feel him declaring the mighty works of God. We have read the sermons, every one. We heard him preach some of them, and to these we first turned in order to find out how like himself he was in the study and in the pulpit—when writing and when speaking — and we found how wonderfully alike he was in the one sphere and in the other. We never heard him deliver a sermon or a lecture without hearing some things which fastened themselves on our mind, and these same thoughts again rivet themselves on our attention as we read. Perhaps the wording is not quite the same—he was too great and too rich to

repeat himself — but though the diction may be different, the thoughts remain."

Dr Jones had already remarked that not a line of the sermons had been prepared by the preacher for the Press, and this, he thinks, gives us a better opportunity of seeing him "in all his naturalness . . . as he was in his study, face to face with the truth, searching it out, recognising it, and seeking the best method of conveying it to his hearers in the way best fitted to glorify God." The Doctor admits he cannot "review" the sermons in the usual sense of the word, and says :—

"Instead of criticising I find myself worshipping—not John Hugh, but his God and Saviour. . . . The general effect on the heart and conscience produced by reading these sermons is something of which I have not felt the like in reading any other sermons. . . . I have never read sermons which produced in me so much of the spirit of worship as do the sermons of Cynfaen."

The Rev. Ishmael Evans states that Cynfaen "gave a new phase to some of the most important truths," and that "he broke the old dead uniformity which had hitherto characterised their treatment too much." I cannot forbear quoting Mr John Evans once more :—

"He often preached under a measure of divine unction and always in a sanctified spirit of dependence on divine support. He was a man great in prayer, and felt as much as any man that he lived, and moved, and had his being in God. In a man conscious of such mental ability, so thoroughly devoid of the fear of man, having an imagination so productive, and uttering his thoughts with such self-possession and power, it was a sign of great grace that he fostered the feeling of dependence on the divine support when performing his public ministrations."

The venerable Richard Roberts, President of the Wesleyan Conference at the time, on hearing of Cynfaen's death, wrote to his brother: ". . . . We have lost one of the noblest of our Welsh ministers; able, profound, and mighty as a preacher; pure and elevated in character. . . ." In his obituary in the *Minutes of the Conference* it is said :—

"He was a man of very rare intellectual ability, his imaginative faculties were of a very high order, and his discourses were full of fresh, vigorous, and stimulating thoughts. He always commanded the especial attention of the intelligent and cultured, and stood high among the preachers of the Principality."

The consistent testimonies of so many independent witnesses, some being eminent ministers of other churches, clearly show that nature and grace had combined in making Cynfaen one of the influential leaders of religion in his age and country. He died comparatively young, in the zenith of his power and popularity, and at a time when the fruits of his ripest years were eagerly anticipated. But the Rev. Ishmael Evans was right when he said that "A BEAUTIFUL AND GLORIOUS PART OF CYNFAEN'S HISTORY WAS HIS DEATH."

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The Rev. JOHN EVANS ("EGLWYS BACH")

By the Rev. JOHN HUMPHREYS, Aberystwyth

The whole life of John Evans ("Eglwys Bach") came well within the long, progressive, and taken altogether, glorious reign of Victoria. He was born on the 28th day of September 1840, and departed this life on Saturday night, the 23rd of October, 1897, having crowded an almost incredible number and variety of events into the comparatively brief span of fifty-seven years.

During this period, the religious life of the Principality has been enriched, beautified, and stimulated by a number of men of great ability, eminent saintliness, and most admirable and strenuous devotion; but its history would be altogether defective and incomplete if the life and labours of "Eglwys Bach" were not taken into account, and a place not assigned unto him in the first rank of religious leaders. He was a star of the first magnitude—a factor of the first import.

It is interesting to notice how, in the Providence of God, this star was timed to appear in the firmament at an opportune hour, and how suited it proved to be to render inimitable service during a definite period.

About the time John Evans was born, several stars of the first magnitude disappeared below the horizon, and the effect was widely and keenly felt. In the year 1838 Christmas Evans, the man of strong imagination, unflagging courage, untold labours and sacrifices, passed away. In 1840 he was followed by the faithful,

evangelical, and saintly Williams of Wern. The twain were followed in 1841 by the immortal John Elias, whose trumpet tongue awoke and kept alive a nation. It would, perhaps, be hard to say that God did not subsequently give to Wales any that came up with these three, for men must be judged by the standard of their times; but each of these was in his way unique, and the nation mourned their loss with a very great mourning. However, their death synchronised, generally speaking, with the birth of him, who, in the Providence of God, was to compensate the nation for the great loss sustained, as far as it would be in the power of one man so to do. And now, it would be well to put in a word as to the place and manner of his appearing.

As many of the wide, beautiful, and busy rivers of the world start from obscure, and comparatively unknown, sources, so it is with men. And perhaps it could not be more true of any man than of John Evans. In the west of Denbighshire, crouching in almost unbroken silence, in the Vale of Hiraethlyn is the little hamlet of Eglwys Bach. Tradition traces back the name to Bach ap Carwed, a North-Walian prince of the seventh century. For every one that would know of this quiet spot in virtue of the prince's connection therewith, a thousand are acquainted with the name on account of the prophet whom God raised there in the nineteenth century.

As to ancestry and parentage, suffice it to say that he came from a race of well-known and highly-respected farmers, several generations of whom had lived at Bodsilyn, by Aber, in the County of Carnarvon. From there, some members of this family were drawn in a south-easterly direction, and settled in the parish of Eglwys Bach. One of these was John Evans, the grandfather of "Eglwys Bach." He settled in a farm of the name of "Ty Du," which is situated about a mile and a half from the hamlet of Eglwys Bach. His eldest son was David Evans, upon

whom, at the death of his father in 1833, came the responsibility of the farm and the home. David Evans was known as a young man of high repute and great skill in the duties of his calling. He was fortunate in winning the affections of a beautiful and religiously-minded maiden of the name of Jane Davies, the daughter of Robert Davies, Dyffryn, Eglwys Bach. About midsummer 1838, these two were joined in holy wedlock in the parish church, and eventually became the parents of the great preacher, whose career we endeavour to trace.

At Ty Du they lived up to the year 1846, and from there they removed a couple of fields width to Goleugell, which had for some time been the home of another branch of the old Bodsilyn family. For the first twenty years of his life, which is more than one-third of the whole, we must think of John Evans as living the life of a small farmer's son, first at Ty Du and then at Goleugell, in one of the quietest nooks in God's great creation, shut out, in an exceptional degree, from contact with the busy world outside.

Towards the latter end of his life he undertook to write what he was pleased to call *Reminiscences of my Life*, where the life of this first period is charmingly depicted, and where some interesting incidents are recorded which otherwise would have been lost. We only wish all the readers of these lines could avail themselves of these "Reminiscences," for apart altogether from the merits of the character concerned, it is doubtful whether anything superior in charm of style and liveliness of depiction has appeared in the Welsh language. It will ever remain among the purest of the Welsh classics. However, this is of no avail for our present purpose, apart from an occasional glimpse it affords of his early life, which otherwise would for ever have remained hid. When we think of the accomplished man he became—we would almost say the polished scholar, in any case, the perfect master of Welsh,

by tongue and pen—it is strange to be told that he was not allowed to attend the Sunday School until he was between eight and nine years of age. To chapel he was taken with great regularity, in spite of long distance, short steps, and bad roads, but not to Sunday School; and he testifies to his ability to read in some measure the English language before he knew a word on a Welsh book. The way in which he was led to master his Welsh Testament is worth recording, for it is an indication of a certain quickness and persistency which, added to a few other things, are the secrets of the man's making.

When he was quite a boy, the home was visited by a virile form of scarlet fever, which put him at the very gate of death, threatened the life of his eldest sister, and in the case of his youngest, proved fatal. When, after the recovery of consciousness, and while he was yet very weak, he noticed in his room a pile of Testaments belonging to the Bible Society, for which his father was one of the agents at the time. He had also noticed how the servant and others, whilst watching over his sister, read out of one of these. His curiosity was roused, and when he had the room for himself, he would slip out of bed and lay hold of a copy. He began by mastering the letters, and was shortly able to read one verse in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians. When he heard a footstep the book was speedily put away; but thus, verse by verse, he soon could read a whole chapter. And when he had gained sufficient confidence, he asked the servant to join him in reading. Thus, on his recovery, he could read his Testament, and he was allowed to attend the Sunday School, and was put in the "reading class." Were it not outside the scope of a somewhat brief and critical article, we might dwell on striking, if not thrilling, incidents in the boyhood life, which show how an "elect vessel" was providentially guarded from physical and moral destruction. Once was he carried into the house

in an unconscious state, having been trampled under the feet of an infuriated cow. Later on, he was within an inch of being dragged into the cog-wheel outside the threshing-floor, and he was only saved by the extraordinary sagacity and strength of the "black mare" of worthy and blessed memory. Were it not that this almost rational creature put her whole force, as if impelled by a higher Power, to retard the progress of the machinery, the boy would have been picked up in a few moments a mangled corpse.

More serious were the perils that came from moral directions. None but the experienced can ever realise the moral peril of a farm lad, who has to spend his days and nights in the company of older men, who often are coarse in habits and obscene in language. Even where evil influence is not meant, it is exerted, and the peril to an affectionate, sensitive boy, as John Evans must have been, would be much above the ordinary. He had been allowed, at his own request, to sleep in the same room as the servant men, in order that he might train himself in early rising. The bailiff at the time was his hero, and this kindly but irreligious man swayed his life as with a magic wand. He became fond of the gun—of poaching by moonlight; yea, and did not rest until he found himself in "the seat of the scornful." He found himself, unawares, as he terms it, "by the gate of hell." But conscience awoke, and, with one tremendous roar, put him in such a terror, that he never faced hell-ward again during his whole life. There is another incident of his early life which he himself regarded as of paramount importance in the shaping of his career, viz., *the death of his mother.* She must have been a woman of striking personality and great force of character. She was the life and sunshine of the home—striking in beauty, incessant in action—always hopeful and bright. And withal, she had an experience of the Divine Life, which was deep, rich, and thoroughly satisfying. Although there were signs of decay in the

active and spirited mother, it was not likely that a boy of fourteen would be troubled with much apprehension, and it was with quite an alarm that he received a midnight summons one night in November, 1854, to appear at the death-bed of his beloved mother. She lived another day and night, and spent the time in sweet song and fervent prayer. The room seemed full of angels, and those around the bed almost expected to see the roof opening on eternal glories. On the morning of the Lord's day, the pure spirit of the mother took its flight beyond the veil, and it is one of the pathetic incidents in human life to see the bereaved boy, at last fully awakened to the hard reality, falling on his knees by his mother's bed and *entreating* that his mother's God might be his God that day and for evermore.

This pathetic event left an indelible impression upon his heart and life; and it seemed as fresh and real as an event of yesterday's when more than forty years after he wrote of it. The gap in the home-life was bitterly felt in spite of the godly care of the best of fathers, and it is interesting to notice how the boy clings to his eldest sister—how both feel together after reconciliation and fellowship with God: yea, and how, in spite of a careless and sleepy church, and not by its instrumentality, they found what they sought. John Evans gave his young heart to God at a revival service, in utter loneliness, feeling that no man cared for his soul.

This happened before he left school, and in reviewing the past he deliberately puts it down to an over-ruling Providence of God, which, by the very process of genuine, evangelical conversion, forges a chain which safely binds him to Nonconformity for the rest of his days. For at this time a fiery temptation came to him. He was the quickest and smartest boy in school—a fact which did not escape the eye of Richard Beverley, the school-master, nor particularly that of the Rev. David Owen, the vicar. The latter was a man of excellent parts, who feared God

from a pure conscience. And if he saw in this farmer's lad the material out of which could be sculptured a strong and beautiful pillar of the Church, and if under the spell of the vision he took the steps that seemed to him most probable to succeed, who can blame him? Already the boy from Goleugell had been confirmed, with a number of others—a ceremony which he regarded as altogether harmless. And now, there was a vacancy for pupil-teachership, and who should have the offer but the sharpest-witted and the best-behaved boy in school? But it meant the severance of his connection with Nonconformity; and for this his grandfather was favourable, his father neutral, leaving it to the good sense of the boy himself—and the boy! Yes, what of the boy? He was torn to pieces between two sets of influences. On the one hand was his thirst for knowledge, and this splendid opening, which probably stretched as far as Oxford, at the expense of Mr Owen, the vicar. But on the other hand, there was the question of fidelity to the Church of his fathers! And while halting between two opinions he lay awake at night, and rolled in agony on the hills by day, bathing the earth with tears. However, the voice which he believed came from Heaven prevailed, and he came to the decision to remain in the Church of his fathers—a decision which he attributes to *conversion before leaving school.* Looking back over forty years of unique public service, it cannot be uninteresting to note the first efforts of "Eglwys Bach" in public prayer and in preaching. The first took place at a cottage prayer meeting at Nant-y-cerig-Bach, a low, two-roomed, straw-roofed, white-washed cottage, standing some three fields' distance to the east of Goleugell. To him, it was a terrible ordeal, but he dared not refuse the old leader who took him in hand. He imagined that the chair before which he was to kneel revolved like a top, but he was bound to try; and try he did. And the

effect on others must have been very different to what he imagined. An old sister broke out into praise while he was praying, and the praise was kept up to the close of the meeting. The next step was to close the Sunday School with prayer ; and hence, he grew from step to step, until at last he could sway with his prayers vast multitudes as the trees of the forest are swayed by mighty wind.

How he worked himself up to the pitch of a first sermon would be a long tale to tell—a tale, however, which is told by him with all the charm of an enchanter. It was the time of great disadvantages, as far as the stimulus of men and means from without were concerned. In that quiet vale there was no master-mind to guide him, and there were no institutions to afford him the means of whetting a mind athirst for knowledge. His days were largely spent in the fields, and on hillsides, and hilltops, drinking the health-giving breezes, communing with Nature, his heart, and his God. There, in day-dreams, he saw open and inviting fields, unconquered kingdoms of thought, and unrealised ideals, fair and numerous. And such at this time was his thirst for knowledge that he devoured every book that came in his way, from Roberts's Almanack to the wonderful works of Dr Dick. He also wrote sermons and preached them to the cattle on the hills, and to "Nantw," the servant at home. And so it came to pass that under pressure from a local preacher, of the name of Robert Davies, a relation on his mother's side, and an exceptionally good and able man, he came to preach his first sermon. The place was Capel Garmon, in the Llanrwst Circuit. The time was two o'clock on a Sunday in 1857. The audience was made up of eight souls. The text was, "Brethren, pray for us"; and having read it twice, he fixed his eyes on the open door, and, covered with perspiration, which flowed simply because of fear, he galloped through without missing a word, and it was all over in thirteen minutes. To make

the event more memorable still, a small dandy-cock came to the door when he drew to a close, and first stretching itself, and afterwards flapping its wings, it began crowing with great unction. It was all so disappointing on the one hand, and ridiculous on the other, that John Evans made up his mind never to make another attempt.

But Providence had decreed otherwise, and the second attempt at Soar, in the same circuit, was more encouraging, though not satisfactory. The third time, however, he was thrown on his own resources, and had to conduct two services by himself. At the close of the evening service, two souls were found seeking mercy, and he took these seals to his ministry as an indication that his call to preach the Gospel was from God. He was as yet but a boy-preacher, and his boyish face and shyness, together with his unclerical garb, was not altogether an advantage. But for the next two or three years his name spread, and his fame grew in an almost incredible manner. Feeding his body with the oxygen of his native hills, and his mind with all the literature he could lay hand on, and his spirit by communion with the Invisible One, he grew apace in every direction requisite to the making of a preacher. By the time he was twenty, it is question whether the Principality had a preacher who could command a larger audience, and move the audience he had, in a more wonderful way.

In 1850 the Wesleyan District was held at Llanfyllin ; and there "Eglwys Bach," and his friend "Cynfaen," were summoned to appear before the brethren as candidates for the ministry, and both were accepted. He was saved the ordeal of appearing before the July Committee by an attack of fever, but was accepted by the following Conference. His keen anxiety to secure the usual three years' training at the Institution was doomed to disappointment, and even his desire to secure the benefit of a prophet's school.

His first labours were in the Amlwch Circuit in Anglesey, and this in the character of a "hired local," *i.e.*, he gave all his time to the work, but he was not called out as a travelling minister. His course began in the autumn of 1860.

However, in September 1861, he began his regular ministry in the same circuit, and here he spent the first two years of his probation up to September 1863. These were years of indefatigable labours, many infirmities, and increasing success and popularity. It would be wearisome and profitless work to follow the migrations of a Wesleyan minister for thirty-six years, and yet this brief survey would be altogether incomplete were we not to give at least a list of the circuits wherein "Eglwys Bach" travelled. Some men are allowed to spend a life-time within a very limited area; to bud and develop, and ripen and decay in connection with the same church or churches. They become local fixtures and authorities. And in this there is an indisputable advantage—the advantage of concentration and conservation. This was not the case with John Evans. He had to put up with a system (with many excellences) which keeps its ministers on the move from beginning to end. They may plant the acorn, but they are not allowed to watch and foster the growth of the tree. They may launch the scheme, but they are not likely to be present at its completion. They are really travelling Evangelists, without "an abiding city" anywhere.

John Evans's migrations were after this manner—Amlwch, 1861-63; Mold, 1863-66; Liverpool, 1866-69; Bethesda in Arvon, 1869-72. This forms what may be called the first cycle of his ministry; and it ought to be recorded that while travelling in Mold in 1865, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. This took place at the Birmingham Conference, the charge being delivered by Dr Osborne, the President, W. L. Thornton, having died during his year of office.

The years 1872-78 were spent in Liverpool, two terms of three years each becoming possible by the division of the Circuit into two. This period was eventful. On the 3rd of September 1872, he was married to Miss Charlotte Pritchard, the only child of Mr John Pritchard, Norwood Grove, Liverpool. This was an exceedingly happy union, although a comparatively brief one.

During this period also he made an extensive preaching and lecturing tour in America, leaving Liverpool 12th June 1873, and returning about the middle of October. He traversed the great Continent from Atlantic to Pacific, breaking forth also to north and south. Altogether he travelled more than 10,000 miles, revelling in the vast sights and preaching to delighted audiences. On his return he plunged into his work with new zest; and while it would be utterly impracticable to attempt a description of his activities in this sketch, some idea of his success as a preacher and pastor may be had by the fact that during his first three years in Liverpool, 175 were converted under his ministry at home, to say nothing of the untold fruit of his labour throughout the Principality.

The eight years 1878-86 were spent in London, and were devoted to the oversight of the few London Welsh who were scattered over the city, and in anything but a flourishing condition. In the opinion of many of his friends, this was a false step. Why should a preacher of his talent and influence, for whose popularity there was no building in Wales large enough, turn his back on golden opportunities, and become practically buried alive? Such were the not unreasonable questions asked. But he had his ideas; and for these he wrought, and suffered. He found the flock in 1879 numbering 108, and left them at 305 in 1886. He also undertook the building of the Welsh chapel in City Road at a total cost of more than £10,000, not to say anything of the £240 annual ground rent. But this herculean task he courage-

ously undertook, and although the labour and anxiety did much to undermine his strength and shorten his days, he plodded on, and practically saw the thing through.

Perhaps at no period of his life did he labour more abundantly than during the eight years of his ministry among the London Welsh. His journeys to the Principality were incessant, and his work in lecturing and preaching almost incredible. And when at home he added to his ordinary duties as preacher and pastor extra studies in connection with various institutions, for the enrichment of his mind. His activities also broke out into English channels, so that his outlook became wider, and his horizon more distant. During this period also there came to him "the greatest sorrow of his life," as he calls it, and soon after, what he could not but consider the greatest honour of his life. The first was the death of his beloved wife; the other was his election to the "Legal Hundred" by the Burslem Conference. His wife died, 17th January 1884, and the honour was done him by Conference in July the same year. Only one Welshman labouring in the Welsh work had received this honour before, the Rev. Samuel Davies; and this is a clear indication of the high esteem in which he was held by his brethren, and particularly so, in England.

From London, he removed to Bangor 1886-89; and he made another tour to America at this time, being accompanied by Mrs Evans—for on 8th July 1886 he had been married to Miss Clara Kate Richardson, of Castle Hill, Ealing, a gifted lady who proved to him a true helpmeet to the end of his days. After one year at Oswestry, 1889-90, he returned to London, not to the Welsh work any longer, but to fulfil an engagement he had entered into with the Islington English Circuit. The severance of his connection with the Welsh work was keenly felt throughout the Principality; but he was not

open to persuasion. The years he spent at Islington, 1890-93, were laborious beyond measure, and as much a success, perhaps, as could be expected from a man whose whole genius and training and adaptation were peculiarly Welsh. However, at the Cardiff Conference of 1893 things were in a measure rectified. After much deliberation, the Conference decided to establish a Welsh Mission for the teeming population of the Glamorgan collieries, with Pontypridd as a centre, and "Eglwys Bach" as the superintendent. In regard to this appointment it is only fair to say that he only gave in under great pressure from friends, both Welsh and English; for he had given his word to Gravel Lane, Manchester, and stuck to his promise faithfully and honourably. He spent four years at the mission, and worked beyond his strength, adding for the last two years the responsibility of the Chairmanship of the South Wales District.

Possibly, the responsibility of a new mission was too great a burden and strain at his time of life; and, beyond all doubt, he greatly overtaxed his strength in the first great campaigns connected with his work. His popular gift attracted the crowds from great distances to the Pontypridd New Town Hall, and a church of considerable magnitude was formed, which now meets in "The Eglwys Bach Memorial Chapel." But as time went on, it was evident that his strength was not equal to the burden. The financial responsibilities, added to the public work at Pontypridd and throughout the country, began gradually to break down visibly the splendid physical frame, and to crush the heroic spirit. But he was faithful to the end; and on Saturday, 23rd October 1897, he undertook a journey to Liverpool for an engagement next day when he was really unfit to leave his bed, and before ten o'clock that night, he had (to use his own word) "slipped to Heaven" at the house of his host and great friend Mr E. Gwaenys Jones,

St Domingo Vale. The following Wednesday he was laid to rest at Anfield Cemetery, amidst unique signs of appreciation and sorrow; and it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that, whilst the thousands stood in tears around his grave, a whole nation lay prostrate in mourning. Thus he passed away far too early, but covered with honours; not having put away his armour, but clad to the last in the full and bright panoply which he had put on so young.

And now, having attempted the impossible task of tracing a life in bare outline, which cannot be really appreciated apart from its myriad details, it becomes our duty to attempt a portraiture of the man—his parts, aims, ideals, accomplishments, and the place he filled in the life of the nation.

As to his outward man, only a word is necessary; but all who had any means of judging will admit that he was a man of truly distinguished appearance and of striking personality. Scarcely of the average height, he was blessed with a splendid physical frame, which in his later years was well-filled. He had a massive head, which stood on broad shoulders, and generally stood well back. His forehead was full and broad; his eyes light-brown and comparatively small, but exceedingly busy and accurate at work. A prominent nose, with nostrils of considerable size, were indicative of strength and genius. His mouth, in spite of lips of more than average thickness, was evidently made for public speech; and a short, thick neck accounted probably for the adoption of a style of speech which was altogether his own. When standing before an audience, taking him simply as a physical appearance, there was that symmetrical proportion and that extraordinary comeliness that made him to the people a very angel of God.

Whether his physical capital was quite equal to what might be estimated, it is hard to say; for it must not

be forgotten that on the mother's side there was a tendency to decay. But thanks to the wholesome fare of Goleugell, the healthful occupations of his early days, the invigorating breezes of the Hiraethlyn hills, and, added to this, a methodical and clean life, he laid down in his early years the foundation of a healthy career of forty years, which bore almost incomparable strain, and was only threatened when his exertions overstepped the bounds of reason.

As to the quality and furnishing of his mind, we are anxious, while well aware of the difficulty, to write without any halting or wavering. Sometimes the popular talent is in danger of being under-rated, because occasionally much seeming success goes with comparatively little capital. On the other hand, undeserved depth and learnedness is connected with a slow, slovenly, droning manner. It would be a great mistake to take a certain show of cautious dulness of manner to be a sure index of depth and massiveness of mind, and an extraordinary measure of culture. On the other hand, in spite of a certain fluent clap-trap of style, which has great attraction for emotional illiteralism, it would be a great injustice to conclude that a truly popular career is inconsistent with great strength of mind and great depth of learning. For, as a matter of fact, these things were combined in the life of "Eglwys Bach."

It would require an expert to analyse his mind, and to show where he was at his very best, and which were the points that tended to weakness. But, generally speaking, he had magnificent powers, being strong in his conceptive faculties, having a deep and a full well of emotion, and having a will power that would carry him through any stress that might come upon him. He had a very "live" mind; and his perception was quick, and clear, and accurate. It was wonderful how much he gathered in, and delightful to watch how, occasionally,

by a sort of a side hint, he would show acquaintance with things beyond his pretensions. No mind which did not possess more than the average capacity could contain the *amount,* to say nothing of the quality, of the furniture with which his was enriched and adorned. Added to a certain alertness of mind and quickness of perception, he had imaginative powers of no mean degree. Indeed, one wonders whether he was stronger in anything than imagination. We are told that in his early days he cultivated some acquaintance with the Muse, and that his attempts were not without a fair measure of promise. We can well believe it. There is very little doubt but that he would have made as fair a show on *eisteddfod* platforms as most of his brethren if he had thought it consistent with his great calling to fritter away his time in that manner! But he did not. The weightier matters of life and destiny so pressed upon him that poesy was ruled out of his curriculum. But where are his peers in imagination and descriptive powers? Who could better pourtray a great scene, and hold his audience breathless in sight of the picture he drew? His "Reminiscences" read like a real romance.

Then, he must have had a very powerful, and also *correct,* memory. Some have the one without the other. Some have a memory for things in general, but are not strong at details. He was strong in both. It is wonderful how he recalls, after forty years, features of Nature and of men. He gives a description of noted characters of his childhood without a detail escaping him. He also recalls sermons, addresses, conversations—to a large extent *verbatim.* This may be accounted for in two ways: by a mind liable to deep and accurate impressions; and by training. It seems to have been his habit to commit everything to memory almost all his life-time, if not altogether so. In any case, we unhesitatingly attribute to him a memory far above the ordinary.

He had, moreover, a sort of enthusiasm for nature which never flagged. Wherever he was he seemed to be *all there.* It is only one in ten thousand who has that energy of nature which always is so alive to surroundings as to lose nothing. He undoubtedly was that one. Added to all this was his strong regulative power. When he had set to himself a goal, obstacles, however formidable, ceased to be.

These are some qualities of nature that in him were prominent, and that to a large extent account for the man's record.

Something should be said further in regard to his ideals and making. Any qualities of nature are but so much material to be used, misused, or neglected. The splendid parts which God gave to "Eglwys Bach" might have been thrown away, or devoted to the service of sin.

But he early set before him certain high ideals, and he bent all his energy in the pursuit of these. It is difficult to know when the ideal of becoming a preacher dawned upon his mind; but it must have been very early. He used to preach to "Nantw" when a boy; and many an oration he poured on the astonished cattle which were entrusted to his care. He was only sixteen when he began his career as preacher; and we believe that from the very first this sacred calling appeared to him in such a glorified form that, practically, he had no eye for anything else. Preaching, of necessity, brought many things in its train, but they were all inferior and subservient. There is no doubt but that he regarded this high calling as an art; and did all that was in his power to give it fine and final touches of perfection. But it was not for art's sake. Beyond all was the great end of preaching—the salvation of men. The glorious ideal, therefore, that was always before his eye was to become and to be such a preacher as might be used of God to turn many to righteousness.

This to him was no small and light undertaking. In spite of natural parts of no ordinary quality, he set about qualifying himself as if he had no parts at all. From the very first he laid stress on at least three things—Knowledge, Propriety, and Godliness. He believed with all his heart in an educated ministry from the first, and his thirst for knowledge was insatiable. His disappointment when the doors of institution and school were slammed in his face was keen, yea, almost killing. And the efforts of his life to compensate for this loss were magnificent, almost gigantic. So that, although he belonged to the evangelistic and popular order of preachers, he yet had as an ideal an educated ministry. And in addition to this he laboured to make himself and his ministry as presentable as possible. In appearance, in voice, in style, and in action, he made himself such as gave his Gospel the best opportunity of realising great results. And, being a minister of sacred things, he cultivated such a close fellowship with God as became, according to those who should know, the supreme secret of his successful career. Space would not allow an account of his hard and life-long struggle in the effort to attain these ideals, nor of his wonderful success in spite of disadvantages. His diary is a revelation of persistent effort, at immense cost, and through great sacrifice. Almost throughout life he was at it by six o'clock in the morning; and he had practically no recreation save change of work. Some idea of his work, and success (in compensating, according to his idea, for the lack of early training), may be had from his efforts during his Welsh ministry in London. He first of all joined evening classes in connection with the Birkbeck Institute; and, later on, in connection with King's College. The result was that, in 1883, he was elected an Associate of King's College, having attended fifteen courses, and having won three certificates of distinction, and two of merit. He came out with honours in essays on Locke and Swift. And all this when he was forty-three

years of age! It is cited simply to show how anxious he was to qualify for the great calling of his life, and how he mastered formidable difficulties.

If any worthy mention could be made of his literary activities possibly this should be the place. Already we have mentioned his early disadvantages and his exemplary diligence. Early in life he became master of a beautiful Welsh style; and by middle age he could wield a ready pen in English. Not much remains of the fruit of his English pen, and had he been allowed to live another ten years, much that had been gradually prepared for would have found its way through the Welsh press. But as it is, we need not complain, for the literature of his native land has been greatly enriched by his facile pen. We leave out any articles that he may have contributed to periodicals, etc. In 1872 he brought out a translation of Dr Tappan's "Review of Edwards on the Will." Later on he was appointed to deliver what was known as the "District Lecture," which was a lecture to be delivered in connection with the Annual District Meeting. He chose as his subject "The Inability and Failure of Natural Science to account for the Origin of Things." All this time he was collecting material for the great work of his life, viz., "John Wesley: his Life and Labour," which came out in 1880. This is really a great work, and is equal to anything written on Wesley in any language. There is not a dull page in the bulky volume. While labouring in City Road he began publishing his sermons under the title, "The City Road Pulpit"; and there appeared four volumes, which had an extensive sale, and are among the treasures of our literature. He also published a small volume on the "Life and Epistles of St Paul," which serves as an introduction to the study of the same; and is the product of a well-informed writer. And among the last things may be mentioned his "Reminiscences," and a posthumous volume of sermons, mostly sketches on Old Testament characters,

with two of his lectures, the one on "Whitfield," and the other on "The Rise and Progress of the Four Denominations in Wales." He had collected the material for a history of Welsh Methodism, but was called away while this was taking form.

Others, undoubtedly, have left more behind them in the way of literary remains, but what he has left will be read with avidity, for he was quite incapable of writing a dull sentence.

Before finally relinquishing this question of literary activity, perhaps we should call attention to the wide field of reading that he traversed. How he did it, with all the public work he accomplished, must remain a mystery. But he read "systematically," as he calls it, and must have utilised his long and almost incessant journeys to an uncommon extent. During one of his Liverpool periods he read eighty-five volumes, and in one year later on he has a record of thirty; and later still ninety volumes in three years. This he kept up almost to the last, and it explains, to some extent at least, the keen edge of his mind, the freshness of his ideas, and the many-sidedness of his knowledge.

It is left to the last to attempt a picture of him as preacher, pastor, and Christian worker in general; and also to find for him his niche in the gallery of those worthies who have pre-eminently assisted in the uplifting of their native land.

And first of all as preacher. It is not too much to say that the pulpit was his throne; and that in preaching he had very few peers in his day, if indeed there was a single man who could move the nation as he did when at his very best. We know comparisons are odious, and that in the Principality denominational feeling runs high. But still, we venture to state deliberately, that when "Eglwys Bach" was having his field day, the chances of any other man were comparatively poor. He had his poor times, and the

records he kept have pathetic references to these. And even his best admirers have to admit that there were times when the stars in their courses seemed to fight against him. Perhaps he was peculiarly reliable on certain conditions, and more dependent on sympathetic surroundings than others of his brethren that might be mentioned. Some may be regarded as safe preachers. They never soar to dizzy heights, nor inflict upon their hearers a sort of *De profundis*. Others are more erratic; sometimes sweeping by like a very tornado of spiritual power, carrying everything before them, while at other times utterly becalmed and unable to move. John Evans belonged to the latter class: not always safe for a good time, but in spite of this, an attraction, a wonder, a delight, yea, a magic, and all else that told upon the people in an inimitable manner.

What was the secret of his popularity? This is easier asked than answered. Possibly the secret did not consist in one peculiar quality, nor two, but in a combination of qualities, which put together made up a very impressive personality. He had those things in a good measure, which are essential to every preacher. He was within certain limits, if not learned, a very well-informed man. He knew his Bible well, and could astonish even able divines with his power of exposition. He had mastered, to a high degree, systems of divinity. And other common, but essential things might be mentioned. But apart from these, any one who *really knew him* as a preacher might mention well-nigh a dozen things which particularly contributed to his immense popularity.

He had an exceedingly fine presence, and people in looking at him, especially as he began to warm to his subject, saw his face "as it had been the face of an angel." This is the childhood memory we have, not of him, but of the conversations concerning him. People seemed to worship his very image. And it is well to be able to strike the imagination of a people even by means of an

attractive presence. Then, he considered every preaching service an *event*, which demanded the most consummate preparation. It was not his custom to appear before his audience ill-prepared, trusting to a message which might come by accident. We have reason to believe, that in preparation he was careful to the minutest detail. He committed all to manuscript first, and to memory afterwards. He also, as a rule, was careful and discriminate in the choice of theme. In the case of those sermons which made and kept up his name, he dealt with subjects that contained the very marrow and fatness of the Gospel. These gave him room to revel in when he and the people were lifted up to "heavenly places." If he had been satisfied with learned disquisitions on peculiar and unfamiliar texts, his name would not be the universal treasure in the heart of the nation which it is to-day. By making the common and essential themes of the Gospel glorious he kept himself in touch with all classes of hearers.

Further, he made great, but not illegitimate, use of his strong imagination in preaching. As stated already, he possessed this power in an extraordinary degree, and we now say that he bent it to the service of the pulpit—and a very useful creature he made of it. His sermons were largely *descriptive*—they were grand, and marvellous pictures, and some will have it that here was the very secret of his strength. Be this as it may, this was a peculiar element in his attractive preaching, and none but those who heard can ever know how by these descriptions he would carry his hearers away until they were quite oblivious of time and place. And in the art of description he was a perfect master. There was not a jot or a tittle in his action but that was under complete control, and perfectly accurate. He could so describe the going and coming of "The Prodigal Son," until people instinctively turned back when he was coming home

expecting to see the approach of the weary, way-worn traveller. He could so describe the coming of Christ, and the resurrection, with the excursion to meet Him in the air from the burial-grounds of earth, that those who heard seemed instinctively to be getting ready for the flight. People, under the charm of his delivery, quite unknowingly moved on step by step, until they found themselves on the pulpit stairs.

Then, there was a certain *homeliness* in his preaching that made everybody in turn to feel that he was his brother. He was so observant, and had such a good memory, that customs and phrases came to his help in the pulpit in a wonderful way. In spite of the seeming paradox, we would say that his language was on the one hand classical; it was, on the other, the language of the common people.

Then his *voice*—that wonderful voice of the charmer! Many would begin with this, and not without some reason; for it was a thing never to be forgotten, and a treasure in itself. It required a little care in the tuning, of which fact he was better aware than anybody else. But when once he got it into trim, there was nothing human that he could not do with it. He could put into it the wailings of the eternally lost, in such a way that the blood would run cold in the veins. Yea, men are known to have wandered whole nights in terror, on the very borders of insanity, having been impressed by his warnings. But he also could put into it the sweet song of singers, and those that play upon the harp, in such a way that the saints would forget all at once their sorrows, and raise a cry of Hallelujah. Sometimes, the transition from one key to another had a marvellous effect. The first note of the sweet, joyful, hopeful cadences would so strike the hearers as to make them forget where they were. One would drop his stick (perhaps a lame old saint under the pulpit), another his umbrella, and a third would unconsciously shout the joy of his heart. And then, on he would go,

soaring higher and higher, taking a whole audience with him, and not one but had his countenance bathed with tears of joy. How that beautiful voice could bear the strain is only one of the mysteries of his wonderful life.

It is out of the question for us to dwell on the unflagging enthusiasm of the preacher, who always threw his whole soul into his preaching, his intense anxiety for results, with the undoubted power of godliness behind all. But put all these things together, with others that doubtless were among his characteristics, and the wonderful preacher is to some extent explained. There is scarcely need to add anything as to his popularity. No chapel in any neighbourhood could contain the people anxious to hear him. Out in the open air, even his prayer swayed the thousands as trees of the forest before the wind. He could have a pitched battle with Vanity Fairs, and preach them to oblivion. And in his great love for this work of calling on the lost to be saved, he actually preached himself unto death.

The results of his preaching will never be tabulated by men. He was persuaded of his call at the beginning by the conversion of two sinners. That was a small beginning to marvellous results. He scarcely ever preached without conversions, sometimes a few, often tens — sometimes scores, and possibly on occasions beyond that. There are thousands in heaven whose faces were turned there by his instrumentality, and surely there are many on the way.

As pastor he was characterised by great care and faithfulness. Generous to a fault, there is none but God who can witness to his kindness to the poor, and his readiness, without pledge, to help in an hour of need. The young people were objects of his special care and sympathy. Sick-rooms and houses of mourning were filled with the fragrance left by the visits of a true man of God. He so lived and moved among the people that not only is his name a household word, but also

is mentioned with the significant, tender accent, which bespeaks respect, yea, sanctity. Like every other Wesleyan minister, he had to take his share in carrying the burden of all the churches. There are some who magnify preaching to the disparagement of all else; who seem to think that fidelity in the larger matter justifies neglect in regard to the thousand and one smaller things which form part of the responsibility of a Wesleyan minister, and especially a Wesleyan superintendent. But he, the prince of preachers, was not so minded. While lavishly spending his strength broadcast throughout the land, his head was full of schemes for the success of the work in his own circuit. He never shirked responsibility; but he attempted great things for the advancement of the kingdom, and also did them. He was extremely careful in carrying out every point, great and small, in Methodist polity; while on the other hand, he took most charitable views of the distinctive tenets and methods of other denominations.

And, after dealing with him almost exclusively as a force within his own denomination, perhaps this sketch should not altogether close without a few sentences as to his connection with, and influence upon, the life of the nation. It goes without saying, that a man like "Eglwys Bach" could not, if he wished, limit his influence to the life and welfare of one religious body. Great men and gifts are common property, in spite of any desire that it may be otherwise. And he of whom we write was the property of the nation, and, to some extent, of two nations. Apart from the promiscuous crowds that always hung upon his lips when preaching in Wesleyan pulpits, he preached in the chapels of all the sects. And his lectures were not the puny products of narrow-minded men. He went outside his own connexion for subjects, such as "George Whitfield," and "The Four Denominations," etc.

And, in addition to his influence as preacher and lecturer, he was for more than a quarter of a century one of the few really eminent men (as far as the ministry is concerned) in the life of the nation. He was a representative man; and if Welsh Wesleyanism was thought of, John Evans was also thought of as a matter of necessity. No one outside the pale of the Wesleyan Methodist ministry knows how difficult it is for a Wesleyan minister to identify himself to any purpose with the life of the nation as such. Are they not constantly on the move? And there must be one of two special reasons why they should connect themselves with national movements at all: either qualification that cannot be ignored, or audacity. Needless to say, it was not the latter in his case.

He was also a great lover of his country, and in spite of any allurements to cross the Dyke, he was a typical Welshman. The blood of Welshmen was in his veins, the soul of a Welshman was in his body, and the language and customs of his native land were as dear to him almost as life.

All that lifted up the nation had his fullest, deepest sympathy, while fully convinced that the power of the Gospel was the great lever. How he welcomed the dawn of a new day in the educational prospects of the nation? And when he died, he was one of the Governors of Cardiff College. For the best part of his life he fought, like a true warrior, the demons of impurity and drunkenness. In politics, he was a true Liberal, not from a superficial attachment to party as much as from a firm conviction that this was the party that made for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

Great as was his love for Wales, and for *Welsh* Wales, he was not a blind fanatic; but he endeavoured to take an intelligent view of the signs of the times. He felt that we were in a transition stage in regard to the language; and he laboured, in spite of some opposition,

to prepare the way for a new aspect of things. The true welfare of his beloved Methodism and his own native land was more in his sight than even the fate of a language. These were his sentiments at the time he was so suddenly taken away.

And when he was taken away, what a gap was made in the life of a nation! Not only was a kindest husband and father removed from the family circle, a devoted Methodist from the life of a connexion, a prince of preachers from the pulpit of the land, a diligent student from the world of books, and a ready writer from the circle of those who wield the pen, but, in addition to all this, a great, big-hearted, noble Welshman was removed from the life of the Principality. His name will ever be numbered among its purest saints; for his thirst was unquenchable for communion with God through holy living. Possibly the chapter of his exemplary holiness has yet in part to be written. If asked, at the very end of this sketch, what in a few words made him what he was, we would say, at the risk of difference with any who knew him—DILIGENCE—PERSEVERANCE—HOLINESS.

THE WELSH NATION AND ITS MISSION

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The human race is made up of individuals, families, tribes, and nations. With one of the last division we have to do in this article—with the Welsh nation. The wording of our subject, "The Welsh Nation and its Mission," shows that we have two things to do: to show that the Welsh people are a nation, and to show that they as a nation have a mission, and a special one.

That we are a nation is a proposition that has been, and is, doubted and denied by many. Whilst the nationality of the Scotch people and the Irish, as well as many others, is believed in, and readily and freely acknowledged, by the majority of Englishmen, they doubt and deny our nationality, and look with ridicule and contempt upon us when we claim it. Matthew Arnold was perfectly willing to regard us as a nation "poetically," but not in reality, and Lord Selborne denied our nationality most positively. In his opinion we had no more right to regard ourselves as a distinct nation than the inhabitants of Yorkshire or the inhabitants of some other part of England. But notwithstanding the assertions of Matthew Arnold, Lord Selborne, and many others, who might be regarded as men of light and leading, we maintain that we are a distinct nation, and that our nationality is much more marked, and in some respects, much more enduring, than the nationality of either the Scotch or the Irish people.

To prove and to illustrate our proposition that the Welsh people are a nation and have a nationality, we

must endeavour to get correct and adequate definitions of the terms "nation" and "nationality." The word "nation" is derived from the Latin *natio*, which, in turn, comes from the verb *nascor*, to be born, and which means literally a being born, or birth. The idea was personified, and *Natio* was the goddess of birth. The term is applied both to persons and animals: as born of one stock it means a people; in the latter, a breed or kind. Less accurately it is used, in a favourable sense, of a company of men; in a contemptuous sense, of a rabble. In English, the term has retained its original signification, and is applied to those who are of the same race; but it has also been extended in its application, and means as well the people inhabiting the same country or under the same government. The best definition of a nation that can be had in any dictionary perhaps is the following: "The word nation signifies a great number of families, derived from the same blood, born in the same country, speaking the same language, and living under the same government." The late Sir George Osborne Morgan, in his article in the *Nineteenth Century*, vol. xliii., has some pertinent remarks on the above constituent elements of a nation. His point is to show that not one of them, but the whole of them, or at least more or less of the whole, can signify a nation. But can the whole mean this? We venture to say no; and we shall prove our assertion. The term "nation" has a larger and deeper meaning than can be found in the elements that have been enumerated.

There is no doubt that common ancestry is the most potent factor in the formation and the constitution of a nation. The consciousness of kindred blood unites those who are under separate authorities. The Greek race was conscious of itself as a nation in its unity of descent, religion, language, and culture, as distinguished from the barbarians, even although it was divided into a great number of small states. The British nation is now

conscious of its nationality although scattered over the face of the whole earth; to the Greater Britains beyond the seas, this little island is the mother-land. The Jews have neither geographical centre nor political unity, and yet they form a nation, bound together not only by common blood, but still more by common faith. This racial sentiment explains the unification of Germany and Italy in our own time, the desire of Ireland for Home Rule, and the division and unrest of the Turkish Empire which so troubles European politics.

But a nation may be formed and maintained even without common descent. The British nation, for instance, is not an unmixed race, as its language, with its Celtic, Teutonic, and Latin elements, testifies; its ancestry, which it has now come to regard as common, was very promiscuous. The Celts even found earlier inhabitants in possession, and did not altogether succeed in their extinction. Then in succession came Romans, Saxons and Angles, Danes, Normans (already a mixed people), and out of all these elements there was formed a nation which, generally speaking, is as little British as it is English, for it consists neither of Celts nor of Angles exclusively. With this people the "Celtic fringe," as it has been called, has not yet completely fused; the Celts of Wales, the Scotch Highlands, and still more, Ireland, retain down to the present day their sense of separate origin. The possibilities of the assimilation of different races into the unity of a nation vary indefinitely, and while in some cases the fusion is easy and rapid, in others it is very slow and incomplete. If difference of language and religion is added to the difference of race, the formation of one nation is very much retarded. Ireland especially is a case in point: the religious difference has accentuated the racial. But as a general rule, the inhabitants of one country coming under one government tend to become one nation, with a common consciousness, although of varied descent.

Geographical position, as well as racial descent, is an important factor in the formation and maintenance of a nation. A political unity also belongs to the complete conception of a nation. A nation may exist, but it does not prosper, without it. Striking instances of a race antagonism within the same political unity are afforded at the present moment by Austria-Hungary, Poles and Finns in Russia, and the Irish in the United Kingdom.

In estimating the value of these four factors which together, but with a something else, form and maintain a nation, the first—the racial—is the most important. Speaking the same language is not essential to true nationality. The Highlanders who know no Gaelic, Irishmen who know no Erse, and Welsh people who know no Welsh, may be as intensely national as ever. The Irish are as intensely national to-day as at any period of history.

We have said that the elements which have been enumerated, with the addition of a something else, are the materials out of which a nation is constituted. What is that something else? Nothing but identity of sentiment, which includes a consciousness that we all belong to the nation, and that we lose our own individual interest in the interest of the nation. No finer specimen of true and genuine nationalism or patriotism can be found anywhere than in Moses, in Deborah, and in Paul the Apostle. This unity of sentiment is the spirit of life that breathes in all true nationality. It is proud of the national history, it joys in the national prosperity, and sorrows in the national adversity. It longs for the national advancement and improvement, and devotes itself to the national interest. It is enthusiasm for the national cause, zeal in the national service, self-sacrifice for the national good, and heroism in the national defence. This sentiment of nationalism has frequently found expression in poetry — in Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Moore, and others.

Having thus defined as accurately and as adequately as we could the term "nation," the derivative term "nationality" now invites our attention. It seems to be used in at least three senses. First of all, it is sometimes used as an equivalent for nation, just as personality is used for person, the abstract for the concrete. Secondly, it is used for the sum of all the qualities that are characteristic of a nation and distinguishes it from all other nations. There can be no doubt that there is distinct national character, due to racial, climatic, social, and political conditions. While an individual Englishman or Welshman and an individual Frenchman may show greater resemblances than differences, yet the Englishman or Welshman and Frenchman, as a whole, are unlike in temperament, disposition, habit, and sentiment.

The consciousness which a man has of belonging to a nation, of inheriting its history, of sharing its culture and of having a part of its life, shows that his nationality is not intended to be an unknown and unchosen possession, but to be known both to himself and to others.

There are many inhabitants of a country, it is true, who possess and exercise the national characteristics, and yet have not any developed sense of their nationality. Racial descent, geographical position, political unity, do not constitute a nation completely until the sense of nationality as a gain and a good, also as a task and a trust, has been born; and the success of a nation is to be determined by the measure in which this sense is intense, not only in a few choice spirits, but becomes extended throughout the whole community.

So much on nationality in general.

Now, what about the nationality of the Welsh people in particular? No two nations or any two men are perfectly like each other. Variety, and not monotonous similarity, is the law of creation, with regard to men and to everything else. One of the characteristics of the Welsh

nation is its antiquity. It is an old nation. Its origin is hidden in the depths of antiquity. Some, like the author of "Drych y Prif Oesoedd," have indulged in the exercise of tracing our history as a nation back as far as Gomer, the eldest son of Japheth, the son of Noah, but to no purpose whatever. All that can be said of the Welsh nation is that it is very old—older even than reliable history. It had been long, and very long, in existence before Julius Cæsar invaded our country about two thousand years ago, so that if Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest could be applied to nations, the Welsh would be the foremost nation in the world. Instead of being absorbed by the English, we continue, and are likely to continue, a distinct nation for many generations yet to come.

Another characteristic of the Welsh nation is its smallness. Some maintain that cosmopolitanism is superior to the patriotism of a small nation. This was the opinion of a great soldier who wrote some time ago words to this effect: "It is humiliating and depressing to be a citizen of a small nation; it is exalting and satisfying to be the subject of a great empire." History gives the lie to that statement. The great empires of the world have not rendered to mankind the greatest service; but the richest treasure and the largest service to mankind have come from small nations. Small nationalities have played, and do continue to play, the grandest parts in the world's history. Where is a big nation that can stand comparison for a moment with the Hebrew and Greek nations? Think for a moment what the weak, small, and despised Hebrew nation did for the world. "Salvation is of the Jews." It was they who taught the world to give up its polytheism and to believe in one God Almighty, the Creator and Sustainer of all things. In their latter days these people were brought into contact with nearly all the great empires of the ancient world. As we read their

history these pass before us in order—Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Is it any exaggeration to say that these empires are remembered by mankind generally, not for their own achievements, but because of their relation to the history of this small nation? What do we, the unlearned, who are not interested in ancient history, care for Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar? They are but names to us, but names that have a meaning and a worth for us only because they were in some measure instruments in God's hands in carrying out His judgments or His mercy on His people. And what do we owe to little Greece? Was it not the Greek nation that accomplished the greatest number of grand feats, and accomplished them well, although it was one of the smallest? It taught the world to think—to seek for the causes of things—to seek for the one in the many. It taught men to love the truth for its own sake, and to see and appreciate the good and the beautiful; and by its valour it saved the West from the despotic tyranny of the East, which was one of the most striking instances of political salvation. In fact, it is impossible for a man to think deeply and to act nobly without coming in contact with Greek thought and Greek history. In Greece were the beginnings of our science and our philosophy, and Greek art, as we all know, is still the despair of the modern artist: it cannot be equalled. Again, we remember the struggle of the Swiss peasantry against the Austrian knighthood, and we remember also that Protestant Christendom owes a debt that can never be repaid to the small Swiss confederacy. Exiles for conscience sake from our own country found refuge there, and were able to carry on their work until a brighter day had dawned when Gospel freedom had come. And all these things were accomplished by small nations. Athens and Attica put together had not more than half a million inhabitants, about three-fourths of whom were slaves,

when it accomplished its greatest feats. So the Welsh nation, notwithstanding its smallness, may yet do great and wondrous things. Its smallness does not necessarily detract from its importance, but rather adds to it. The importance and glory of any nation do not consist in its number and strength, but in its intelligence, spirit, and character.

Other prominent features in the character of the Welsh nation are vitality and persistency. In these respects it stands by itself, especially when we remember how cruelly it has been treated, and how unrelentingly it has been persecuted. The Romans, the Saxons, the Angles, the Danes, the Normans, and the English have attacked and persecuted us; the British Parliament and the hierarchies of great churches have conspired and raged against us. But in spite of all their powers and all their assaults, we have held our ground valiantly and unflinchingly in all our storms and trials, and have grown stronger and stronger in them and through them.

To crush the Welsh people and to crush their language, or rather to crush the nation by crushing its language, has been the policy of the British Parliament and the State-aided Church of England for many generations. From an article published in *Y Traethodydd* in the year 1850, our readers may see a series of acts which were passed by Parliament with a view of crushing the Welsh nation and the Welsh language. The spirit of these acts permeated the Church also. Its authorities not only hated Welsh Nonconformists, but they hated the Welsh clergy also, deprived them of the best preferments, to give them to their own relatives and friends. They actually occupied every bishopric in the Principality for the period of one hundred and fifty-five years. It was only lately that the Welsh clergy had this grievance removed. Many other things also might be mentioned which tended

to crush and annihilate the Welsh nation. The upper class in Wales and the capitalists have nearly always been Englishmen, and have played into the hands of the priests and the nobility, whose constant habit has been to send their sons and daughters to England for their education, and to disparage and discourage everything Welsh. The Welsh language was until lately excluded entirely from our public schools and colleges ; and a remnant of this old feeling towards the Welsh and their language continues even to the present day. What else could account for the following facts?—That no single Welshman is at present a minister of the Crown, an ambassador, a judge of the Supreme Court, or a governor of a British Colony ; and that whilst Scottish matters are dealt with in Parliament by Scotch members, Welsh matters are dealt with there by men who know as little of our wants and wishes as if they had lived in the uttermost parts of the earth. When we think of these things, and many others which might be mentioned, we are quite surprised that we are still alive as a nation, and that our language has not been long ago crushed out of existence. But neither contingency has happened. The Welsh nation is still alive, and its language is alive also ; and both are more alive and fuller of power and utility than they ever were. In consequence of the efforts of the late Henry Richard and a few other Welsh patriots, the extension of the franchise, the revival of the eisteddfod, the Cymru Fydd Movement, the establishment of intermediate schools and the university colleges, Welsh nationality has been greatly strengthened, and the Welsh language has been greatly revived. There are now more Welsh books, Welsh magazines, periodicals, and newspapers published and circulated than ever, and far more Welsh spoken. So the Welsh nation and its literature are fairly flourishing. Those, we presume, are some of our chief characteristics as a nation.

Our next business will be to ascertain as far as we can what is our mission as a nation? What is the great end of our national existence? Or what can we do and what ought we to do for the world's movement, or for the world's advancement? That every nation, like every individual, has a mission is beyond question; but to ascertain what it is is not an easy matter. Ruskin was a firm believer in this doctrine, and so was James Russell Lowell when he said:—

> "All nations have their message from on high,
> Each the Messiah of a central thought,
> For the fulfilment and delight of man."

We have already referred to the missions of the Hebrew and the Greek nations; and now the question comes to us, what is ours? We answer:—

1. That we have a *social* mission to nations around us, and especially to the English. We can teach them the love of freedom, spontaneity of action, and above all thriftiness.

2. In *education* also we are far ahead of the English nation—not ahead of English individuals: far from it, but ahead of the English people in general—and therefore can teach them a lesson or two. By means of Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, expository preaching, and our monthly and quarterly magazines, the working men of Wales are well informed in the Scriptures—more informed in them than are the working men of any other country. The best review on "The Method of the Divine Government," by Dr M'Cosh, according to the testimony of the doctor himself, was the one given to him in broken English by a common quarryman in Carnarvonshire, and we know of some common colliers who were sufficiently advanced in knowledge to write very able articles for an important Welsh Biblical Dictionary. The National Eisteddfod also has rendered incalculable service

to Welsh education and Welsh culture. It has been the means of whetting the minds of hundreds of our people, and of drawing out and developing their latent powers and setting them in full activity. The desire of knowledge in a less or greater degree is implanted in every human being; but we believe that it is implanted in a greater degree in the majority of the inhabitants of the Principality than in the inhabitants of any other country. The efforts they put forth, and the sacrifices they make in order to obtain knowledge, are palpable proofs of that. Where in the whole world, except in Wales, have the working men been seen banding together and contributing from their limited means towards the establishment of a college for higher education?

Now, considering all these things, and looking to the near future when the Elementary Education Act of 1902 will be amended, and the educational scheme of the Principality will be approaching perfection, when the whole ladder of education will be free to all from the lowest step to the highest, what will be the fate of our nation? May they be scholars with the love of God in their hearts, and the Spirit of God resting upon them and guiding them. That will be henceforth a part of our mission — to watch carefully that advancement of learning amongst us is not to be followed by irreligion and infidelity, but by a truer religion and a much stronger and grander type of character.

3. We have a mission *politically* as well as socially and educationally, and we must fulfil it. Of all the nations around us, we in Wales, in all probability, are among the most ardent lovers of freedom and the bitterest haters of bondage and tyranny. And it is our bounden duty to give full expression to this feeling which is innate in us. Ever since the wars of Owen Glyndwr, down to the time of the Rebeccaites, the Tithe war, and the present agitation against the recent Acts referring to education,

the Welsh nation—that is, the bulk of it — has been constantly and consistently on the side of freedom and against coercion of every kind. Thus, both by action and by example, we teach our weaker brethren, and we mean to continue to teach them till we shall bring judgment unto victory. We shall not cease till we shall have a free State, a free Church, and no favour.

4. The teaching of *morals* and *purity* is also a fruit of our mission. While we are far behind what we ought to be in morality, as well as in many other things, we may, perhaps, get some comfort in the fact that in general morality we are as a nation very far ahead of the nations which are around us. Many have disputed and many do dispute this assertion, but statistical facts and general observations are against them. The educational commissioners, who visited our country about sixty years ago, made a desperate attempt to show to the public, and especially to the English public, that we, as a nation, were very low in our morals. Their great aim was, not to enquire impartially into the state of education in the Principality, but to misguide the public with regard to our faults and want of proper conduct and of good manners. The morality and behaviour of the common people was set forth in the darkest colours possible. If we had been barbarians we could not have been worse. But their report, when it was published, was read and studied, not by the common people, but by men who knew Wales ten times better than the commissioners. The consequence was that the truth was found out, and it was shown that the commissioners were very much wanting in fairness. Authoritative Government statistics, instead of substantiating their assertions, turned the tables upon them, and showed that Wales, with all her faults and drawbacks, was far more moral than England, and that where the standard of morality was lowest in Wales it was not in the Welsh districts and

Welsh counties, but in the counties and towns in South Wales where the number of English was greatest. A Belgian statistician, in his book on man ("Sur L'Homme," Bk. iii., chap. iii.), goes so far as to say that the Celts in general are the most moral people in Europe. And would it not be equally true to say that the Welsh people are much more moral than the rest even of the Celts? Thus, if faith can be put in Government statistics, to say nothing of our own observations and the observations of others as well, we can firmly say that we, as a nation, are greatly ahead of other nations in morality—that we are more free from crime than any of them. In saying this, we are far from saying that our morals are in any way perfect. In morals, as in almost everything else, for our advancement in virtue and goodness, we have much land to possess, and our privileges and our religion urge us to go forward and possess it.

5. Our mission includes also the study, cultivation, and preservation of our *language* and *literature*. We have a language that we should be proud of. It is not only an old language, but also a rich and an independent one. It has plenty of strong, impressive words, and beautiful idioms, which have not been borrowed from any other language. There is no conglomeration about it. And as to its pathos and music, it stands almost by itself. It is the language of poetry, of the heart, and of the sanctuary, and it has stood and survived the storms and oppositions of the ages, and it is still as full of life and energy as ever, if not fuller. As a nation, we are under obligation to, and responsible for the study, cultivation, and preservation of our beautiful language, not to the exclusion of the English tongue: that would be suicidal, but as an inheritance which has descended to us from our fathers, and a treasure that can never be over-appreciated. It was the language of our parents, and its words were the first uttered by them in our ears.

In it, too, the Gospel of the Grace of God was first preached to us. Some may make light of all this, and call it mere sentiment, forgetting that it is sentiment, and not reason, that rules the world.

Why should we study, cultivate, and preserve our language? First, because this has not only been neglected in the past, but greatly opposed and obstructed. As has been observed already, the Welsh tongue was never admitted into the Parliament, universities, or the High Courts of Justice of this country. It was not allowed to be taught, or even to be spoken, in our elementary and grammar schools, and whosoever might inadvertently or unthinkingly speak it, the rod or cane would be ready for him. Secondly, because it has been betrayed and wounded even in the house of its friends. Many Welsh parents, especially in years gone by, thought themselves grand in neglecting to teach Welsh to their children; and the foolish conduct of the parents was very acceptable to the children. This was, and continues to be, very common throughout Wales. When they were not able to speak English correctly themselves, Welsh parents encouraged, or at least permitted their children to be brought up as monoglot English. The common excuse for their conduct was that they could not get their children to learn Welsh. This meant that the children were their masters, and not they the masters of the children? They were and are not only bringing disrespect upon their own language, but also upon their parental right to rule and discipline their own children; and the natural result has been that the children look with contempt on the Welsh language, and, as a corollary, on their parents also. The Jews, with all their failings and weaknesses, are not guilty of this. Wherever they are found, and they are found almost everywhere, they teach Hebrew, the language of their fathers, to their children. If it were but to avoid these disastrous results, we ought to respect

our language by studying, cultivating, and preserving it. But there are other reasons why we should do this. The fact that the Welsh is such a fine language in itself, and that scholars of other nations have long studied it, ought to be a sufficient inducement for us all to do the same.

But some may ask, how can we do this? Our answer to them is, that we can, and are to, study the Welsh language in the same way as every other language is studied, by acquiring a thorough knowledge of its words, laws, traditions, and history. To have a uniform system of orthography would be a great help for studying our language; and with our learned principals and professors, our bards, and other men of letters, this could easily be brought about. That being done, our next step should be, to secure for our language a prominent and honourable place in the *curricula* of our colleges and our university, and in their examinations, and to make Welsh a compulsory subject of study in our elementary and intermediate schools.

And as to Welsh *literature*, we ought to do, and could do, much as a nation. Much has been done by individuals, but much more could and ought to be done by the nation. All we want to make known and improve our literature is a thorough Welsh *renaissance*—something on a small scale, like the revival of learning and art which took place in Europe in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The *renaissance* and the reformation were not at all antagonistic to each other, but on the contrary: they were two sides of one great movement; and true revival of letters in Wales would not be antagonistic to the great wave of religious revival which has, and is now, moving over our country, but would supplement it.

In our literature we have an accumulation of the thoughts, feelings, and aspirations of our nation for many ages and centuries, given in prose and poetry, or chronologically in poetry and prose. It contains what was best

and noblest in our nation throughout the ages; and it is what we can, not only read, but read with interest and pleasure. By the literature of a nation we can gauge its mental ability, its feelings, aspirations, and character. It it is a mirror of the past handed down to us for use in the present. In this respect, it is exceedingly precious. The real wealth of a nation is not in its silver and gold, in its houses and lands, but in its art and literature. The works of Milton, Shakespeare, and others, are more precious to, and reflects more glory upon, the English nation to-day than its material wealth. The same may be said of Welsh literature, but not to the same extent. With our literature we have two things to do as a nation: First, to acquaint ourselves with it, to acquire as much knowledge as we possibly can of its contents and its history; and secondly, to do our best to improve and enrich it. Though we have many good works in prose and poetry—works of great value, as they are works of genius—yet we are destitute of works of the highest order. Like the Americans, we have no epic poem, and no drama yet, and not even a national song worthy of us as a nation—a song that can touch us at every point, and tune every chord in our nature. It is to be hoped that, with the educational advantages which we have, and the collection of all our literature that we are about to have in the national library at Aberystwyth, and the large collections existing at Cardiff, Wales will be raised in the estimation of all men of letters through the appearance of men of great abilities amongst us—mighty men of letters.

6. But in the *religious world*, after all, is our mission most prominent. We are endowed with greater qualifications and simpler means for the carrying out of our mission here than we are in any other sphere or direction. We are a religious nation—more religious, perhaps, than any other, and so more equipped for religious work. Think for a moment what a grand collection of hymns we have.

These hymns are in quality equal to the best hymns of any nation—those of William Williams of Pantycelyn, Ann Griffiths, Morgan Rhys, Robert ap Gwilym Ddu, and others. In whatever the Welsh are behind other nations, we are abreast with them, and perhaps before them, in hymnology.

And not only that, but the Welsh nation is a musical nation. We are endowed with a remarkable power of, and taste for, singing; so that our country even is represented as "a sea of song." The part that was assigned to our hymns and the singing of them in the last revival was most remarkable, and many times revivals had their origin and sustenance to a great measure in, and by, singing. The Welsh people are singers. It would have been as easy to prevent the lark, the thrush, the blackbird and the nightingale from singing, as to prevent them. They sing at their homes, from their homes, at sea, and on land, in their little Bethels, and in their big sanctuaries. How delightful, elevating, and soul-inspiring it is to hear them joining and blending their voices in praises to their Lord and Master both on the Lord's Day and in the open-air on the days of their associations! Welsh singing is not a choir singing, but congregational; all the congregation join in praising Him who inhabiteth the praises of Israel. These melodious hymns, and these extraordinary powers to sing them, were not given us, we may be assured, without a purpose. God must have intended them for our own use and benefit, and for His own glory.

7. Another part of our mission was, and is, *to reach the working classes, and to bring them to the feet of Jesus.* The great question in England to-day is, How can we bring this about—how can we reach the masses? The working people seem there as if they were going further and further every day from Christ and Christianity. The last religious census in London threw a very lurid light upon this question, till our ministers and churches are at their

wit's end in grappling with it. But the problem has been solved in Wales long long ago. By the indefatigable labours of our forefathers, the Gospel was preached to all classes alike in the Principality, and the poor especially received it gladly. So that now the bulk of the membership of our churches is made up of the working classes. Passion for truth, for souls, and for Christ alone moved the old preachers in Wales to accomplish such a stupendous work; and the same passion would soon enable our friends in England to do the same. Let them remember, and always remember, that the masses of their countrymen can never be reached and won for Christ by would-be gentlemen. Kid-gloved preachers have no chance of reaching and winning the masses. Nothing but prayer and hard work will succeed in this great enterprise, and the work must be carried on in the same way as it was carried on in the Principality. In this work, the English must work as the Welsh did—by going to the people, making themselves acquainted with the people, and sacrificing themselves for the people.

8. Preaching the Gospel also is a part of our mission as Welsh people. Preaching has always been pre-eminently characteristic of us as a nation. If Welshmen can excel in anything, they can excel in preaching. The great preachers of Wales in days gone by were amongst the greatest preachers of the world. They were made, both by nature and grace, to be mighty preachers. And we are happy to say that this wonderful and gracious gift is not diminishing in the Principality. The preaching of Wales to-day is the best preaching in the whole world. By saying this we do not mean that we have amongst us individual preachers who are better and abler preachers than any individual preachers of any other nation, but that preaching in Wales, on the whole or on an average, is the best preaching in the world. But on this point we are now not going to enlarge, neither are we going to dwell on Welsh

preaching in general, or on the preaching of some Welsh preachers in particular. That work has been most efficiently done already by such men as the late Rev. Dr Owen Thomas, Kilsby Jones, and the Rev. David Davies, in his "Echoes from the Welsh Hills." All that we are going to do is to make a few suggestions which are relevant to the subject :—

1. That we should be thankful to God for granting us as a nation such grand and effective power—power to move the mind, hearts, and souls of our fellow-men.

2. That we should exercise our preaching power both fully and faithfully.

3. That we should use every means for strengthening and improving it.

4. That we should pray God for a greater pouring of this power, especially on our best and most educated young men in our churches.

5. That the churches should make every effort to secure the proper training and equipment of these young men.

6. That these young men might be allowed to go freely to labour wherever the Spirit of God may lead them : they should not be expected by the Welsh churches to stay in Wales, but allowed to go anywhere and everywhere as the Spirit may move and lead them.

7. And lastly, that they may be encouraged and respected in their work, and acknowledged for their work according to their ability and fidelity, so that the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes x. 7. could not possibly be applied to them.

The Rev. EDWARD MATTHEW of Eweny. [*To face p.* 463

The Rev. EDWARD MATTHEWS of Eweny.

The Editor regrets that, owing to the nonfulfilment at the very last moment of a solemn and sacred pledge by an eminent divine—a pledge so often repeated and confirmed—he has been unable to include a sketch of the Rev. Edward Matthews, as advertised. His regret is intensified by the fact that Mr Matthews represented so well the picturesque Welshman in the Calvinistic Methodist Denomination, and was also among the most brilliant preachers of his generation. The Editor could have made other arrangements which would have saved the Denomination and himself this disappointment.

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REVIEWS

By Rev. JOHN CLIFFORD, D.D., LL.D.

This Book, besides being full of charm for Welshmen, will go far to explain the Welsh people to others. It traces the life of the Welsh race to its springs, describes the leading characteristics of the people; their ideas, their capacities, their service, and their mission. It is a cogent defence of the Welsh Nationality and of its aspirations and ambitions, because it is a careful and comprehensive explanation of the roots and fruits of Welsh life.

It is concerned, as the title states, with leaders; with men who have gathered into themselves the thoughts and yearnings, the faith and hope of the people; embodied them, manifested them, and so led the people by them. The leaders of a people are the best pictures of a people. They show not only themselves, but those they lead. For who are they? Powerful, great, and original they may be, but apart from the commonalty amongst whom they live and from whose condition they derive their inspiration and impact, they are impotent. It is the function of a leader to interpret and express the consciousness of his race; and to aid as far as he can in the realisation of his nation's best self.

But the Welsh are a religious people. Everybody who knows anything of Wales knows that. Their temperament and instincts predispose them for awe and wonder in the presence of the mysteries of life. They are mystics. They dwell in the realms of the imagination and poetry, and those realms border on and overlap the realm of Religion, with its wide outlook and its far-away horizons. Therefore, the leaders that best express the life of Wales are its "religious leaders," and this book which treats of Wales in the Victorian Era exhibits it to us on its religious and literary side; but since religion and literature are universal, there is not much in the life of the last seventy years that is not swept within the purview of the writers of these pages. National Education, primary, secondary, and university; "civics," "politics," disestablishment and such themes appear; for how could men lead a nation religiously and ignore factors like those in the building up of the people?

We have sketches of the character and services of the great men of the Welsh pulpit; four Episcopalians, four Baptists, four Congregationalists, three Calvinistic Methodists, and two Wesleyans. These are preceded by an introductory paper written by the Editor on the Victorian Era, rich in information, suggestion, and nourishment; and followed by another paper by Dr J. A. MORRIS, of Aberystwyth, showing with considerable skill that the Welsh form a nation, and have a distinctive mission, and describing their qualifications for discharging their God-given task.

Some of the leaders I knew, and it has been a sincere pleasure to renew my acquaintance with KILSBY JONES, Drs HERBER EVANS, THOMAS THOMAS, JOHN THOMAS, THOMAS CHARLES EDWARDS, and others. For some reason I instinctively turned first of all to the paper on KILSBY JONES. I remembered his coming to London, the "great expectations" raised, the confused and contradictory talk about him; his fine hatred of all hypocrisies, his splendid defiance of crippling conventionalities, his originality of thought and poetic expression. This sketch of him by the Editor is a fine piece of work. To read it is to be instructed and roused, infected and inspired. Even the record of his enthusiasm is contagious, and the greatness of his service is indescribable. So, had I space I would write on each one of these seventeen sketches. They are admirably done, and will effectively aid in continuing the work of these leaders in Wales, and extending their influence far beyond. Students and preachers will be quickened and guided, and patriots will be stimulated by this portrait gallery of the foremost Welsh Religious Leaders of the Victorian Era.

14th October 1905.

By JOHN RHYS, M.A., D.Litt.

PROFESSOR OF CELTIC, OXFORD

THIS work of many colours speaks for itself: it requires no formal introduction. No thoughtful Welshman can take it up without finding in it chapters that will deeply interest him whatever his creed may be. For even when the subject of the biographical sketch fails to enlist his entire theological sympathy, he will probably be attracted by a skilful delineation of character or by a feat of psychological anatomy. I am free to confess that I have perused the whole without any lagging of interest from the beginning to the end. I

have, however, the advantage of having personally known no fewer than eleven out of the seventeen leaders whose lives are here discussed, and some time or other I had the pleasure of hearing most of the other six preach.

To a younger generation this volume presents a picture of a phase of Welsh history which has almost passed away already, and to men of my own age it will be found to recall in a vivid manner many things now buried deep in their memory of the past. They will agree with me, perhaps, as to some of the points of difference between the old order of things and the new. Some of them will remember, as I do, the prejudice which once existed among the Nonconformists of Wales against preachers who were "collegians," as they were called. The waning of that prejudice implies, besides an important shifting of opinion as to the preacher's source and fountain of inspiration, the substitution, to a certain extent, of acquired knowledge for native eloquence, of measured movement for the rugged impetuosity characteristic of some of the more powerful preachers of the early portion of the period. As far as it goes, this is a change which in the case of any other vocation than that of a religious leader, might be described briefly as one of a nature to reduce the apparent distance between genius and respectable mediocrity; and so, certainly, with regard to the sacerdotalism which has begun to spread itself from England to the Established Church in Wales. In outward appearance, at all events, the religious leaders among the Nonconformist Bodies assimilate themselves now more and more to the Clergy of the Church of England, and the white tie has invaded distant dingles where no such a vision was formerly to be seen. It may be a delusion on my part, but it seems to me, looking on with the untrained eye of a mere layman, that the whole body of the ministers of religion in Wales, with the Clergy of the Established Church taking the lead, and the others following in their denominational positions, is moving slowly but steadily in one and the same direction, to wit, in that of sacerdotalism. In portions of that long procession, if I may so picture it, the movement cannot escape even the most casual observer, while in others it is hardly perceptible: *e pur si muove.* The movement is there and it is set in the one direction, that which is clearly indicated by the most extreme of Anglican ritualists. It is to be hoped that the description of the older leaders as they appear in this volume may help to call the attention of the present-day leaders to the change which is quietly proceeding, and to make them examine it with all the deliberation and honesty which so grave a question deserves.

Of course, the contrast which has just been suggested as between the older leaders and those of to-day implies something like a corresponding contrast between the communities led by them. The preacher of the present day has to address audiences that have a larger acquaintance, for example, with current events and current literature: for better or for worse they indulge in more newspaper reading, and I believe that they are less acquainted with the Welsh Bible. This I may illustrate from facts which have come under my own notice: in my Mabinogion classes years ago when a pupil's acquaintance with a Welsh word happened to be very doubtful, I used sometimes to say: "That word ought not to appear strange to you: it occurs in such and such a passage in the Welsh Bible." This would bring it back to his recollection; but nowadays that sort of stimulus elicits no response: there is not sufficient acquaintance with the phraseology of the Welsh Bible to be of help. The old-fashioned evangelist knew his Bible from cover to cover, but the present day preacher has to have one eye on the Bible and the other on the public Press, and to draw instruction frequently from the passing events occupying the columns which his audience are in the habit of reading. Here, from the Biblic point of view, there is a loss, but from another point one sees that there may be a gain accruing from a wider sympathy with humanity: whether the profit and loss balance one another I must leave it to subtler observers to decide. But it is quite certain that the altered conditions make it impossible for the modern religious leader to be an exact counterpart of him of a previous age. Of the two sets of conditions, the more modern seems to be the harder, though one has freely to admit that hardly any conditions can prevent excellence from asserting itself.

From what I observed on a hurried visit to America I should say that the old state of things as I remember it in Wales in the fifties remains, with exceedingly little change, in some of the Welsh communities there; and as might be expected, it is ministered to by a journalism breathing the same kind of atmosphere as the "Geiniogwerth" of the days of my childhood.

It was a most happy thought on the part of Dr Vyrnwy Morgan to bring together to a neutral arena so many able representatives of so many widely different opinions; and the volume seems calculated to act as an eirenicon on a people which is just now divided on the question of religion and education. He will, if I am not greatly mistaken, soon prove to have earned the cordial thanks of the Welsh people in all parts of the world.

17*th October* 1905.

By Sir ALFRED THOMAS, M.P.

Welsh temperament warrants us in assuming that at all times, since the advent of Christianity, Wales had great preachers, but certainly at no like period in our history have we had such a galaxy of good and great preachers as in the Victorian Era. Whether they will ever again hold quite the same position in public estimation as in times past is perhaps questionable; conditions have so changed as to make that almost impossible. The status of the preacher in Wales of old was quite unique: its nearest approach was that of the Catholic priest in Ireland. But whatever may be the new conditions, preachers have only to remain in the future, as in the past, not a caste, but members of the community, and with a devotion to duty equal to that of their predecessors, to command like respect and veneration.

It is said that the history of the world is written in the biographies of great men, and we have in this volume the history of Wales in the Victorian Era, an Era which with the Elizabethan and Cromwellian, mark the three greatest periods in our history. The book is quite encyclopædic in character, and contains a mass of historical dates and facts which set forth the progressive continuity which constitute our peculiar genius as a people.

The book treats of the Makers of Modern Wales on its religious and literary side, the creators of our modern educational, political, and social ideas. It traces and analyses the roots of our national aspirations, and shows in what direction our salvation as a nation lies. In the editor's review of the Era there is no sycophantic pandering to popular passions and sectarian prejudices, but a manly, discriminating, and philosophical review of the men and movements of that period. He writes with much artistic restraint and carefulness; he depicts with strong and masterly touches the ideals, hopes, and possibilities of our race. In conception, execution, and idealisation this work is unique. It strikes a note so different from anything to which we have been accustomed. We have had biographies of good men, but no writer has given us such a work as this. It was certainly a happy and original thought to bring together so many representatives who differed in their ideas, methods, and organisations, and to show how they, unconsciously to themselves, co-operated in the upbuilding and emancipation of the Welsh race. The purpose of the book, we take it, is to reconcile apparently conflicting forces, to fortify, and to nationalise. It touches the unity rather than the tumult of Welsh

life. The editor takes into account the various religious bodies, and deals on equal terms with the facts and the forces relating to their origin, their growth, and their comparative place and importance in the making of Modern Wales. The great secret of the book consists in distinguishing and seizing upon those parts in the lives and aspirations of others which correspond to our own, and wherever there breathes a Welsh patriot who believes in, and hopes for, a larger liberty and a greater measure of unity and peace, this book will be a god-send. It is in fact an embodiment of the genius of Wales. For these and other reasons, I most heartily commend this work to the earnest consideration of Welshmen both at home and abroad. It will do more than any other known work in welding together Welshmen of various creeds and modes of thought, and it will enable us to realise what noble, generous, and gifted souls there are outside our own sect and creed. The work cannot fail to prove a source of inspiration to the younger generation of Welshmen. To read and to study it, will make their heart burn with a consuming desire to emulate the spirit and example of these grand and heroic leaders of the Victorian Era who, through a cheerless, and even a denuded existence, fought and suffered for their country's good. This production is altogether a great literary effort which will make Wales proud of and grateful to its editor. He has proved himself to be the possessor of some superb gifts, and exhibits a remarkable degree of knowledge of the forces which have swayed and controlled our life as a people. I thank him for his patriotic work. He will occupy no mean place on the bead-roll of those Welshmen who have rendered their country good and lasting service. May it ever be the good fortune of Wales to be guided and directed by such splendid exponents of the Divine Oracles as were the Welsh Religious Leaders in the Victorian Era.

18*th October* 1905.

By Professor J. E. LLOYD, M.A., Bangor

I have greatly appreciated the privilege, so kindly accorded to me, of reading in proof, Dr Vyrnwy Morgan's "Welsh Religious Leaders in the Victorian Era." It was a happy thought to attempt to give a survey of the religious life of Wales during this most important period, by means of biographies of carefully selected

leading preachers. It seems to me that Dr MORGAN has worked out his plan with great success. Not only has he recognised the importance of including representatives of each of the leading bodies of Christians working in Wales, but he has also contrived to introduce the element of variety into his denominational panels. For instance, among the Baptists, the culture of THOMAS THOMAS and the native genius of that sturdy son of Berwyn, CYNDDELW, are skilfully contrasted, just as among the Independents, the magisterial dignity of JOHN THOMAS is pleasantly set off by the eccentricities of that truly great soul KILSBY JONES. A great deal of light is incidentally thrown, by this book, upon the early struggles of Welsh preachers, the sources of their pulpit power, and the manifold activities in which they engaged. It is a pleasant feature of most of the writing that the spirit of humour has not been banished from it, as though these mighty masters of the assemblies were not sometimes to be presented to us in the guise of men. I feel sure that Dr MORGAN'S book is one which every lover of Wales will be glad to have, and that it will prove a most useful introduction to those across the border who wish to gain an insight into the temper and recent history of Welsh religion.

19*th October* 1905.

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